

No 61,719

TOMORROW

Writs-crackers... Michael Seely on Fred Winter...

Run... Among the Christmas post: Letters from Peter Rabbit and Squirrel Nutkin.



Class... The rise of the middle class pressure groups. Sowing the seeds of civil war in Namibia.

Nilsen hurt in prison yard scuffle

Dennis Nilsen, serving a life sentence for murder, was treated in Wormwood Scrubs hospital, London, yesterday for a four-inch cut to his left cheek after a scuffle in an exercise yard with another prisoner.

UN chief's fear of nuclear war

Senior Javier Pérez de Cuellar, the UN Secretary-General, urged Mr Andropov and Mr Reagan to have the courage to negotiate and help avert a nuclear war.

Only 3 more price rise days to Christmas



Picket appeal

Leaders of the National Graphical Association have asked 'sympathetic' unions to back the reimposition of a picket line at the Warrington print works of Mr Eddie Shah.

Swedes defiant

Sweden defied US pressure to hand over American computers seized en route to Russia. As a gesture of neutrality, it decided to keep them indefinitely in Sweden.

Olivetti deal

American Telephone and Telegraph is taking a 25 per cent stake in Olivetti, the Italian data processing company, through a \$260m (£183m) share issue.

Wales fail

Wales failed to qualify for the European Championship football finals when Yugoslavia beat Bulgaria with a goal in injury time in Split yesterday.

Letters: On Harrods bomb, from Mr D. E. Moshan, and others; gas industry, from Sir Kenneth Hutchison, FRS

Leading articles: Parliament; Policy on IRA; Poland

Books, page 9 Fiona MacCarthy reviews the biography of John Gray, the model for Dorian Gray; Antonia Byatt on Freud, Bevis Hillier on Blackwell's Elaine Feinstein on fiction, Goutran Goulden on travellers' tales, Hugh Montgomery-Massingberd on beer.

Features, pages 8, 10 A crucial weekend in the BBC's ratings battle; Bernard Levin on royalty, smoking and feminism; the IRA loses ground in the US; Christmas cajolery, the professional way; a profile of Roald Dahl

Obituary, page 12 Gwen Berryman, Major-General R. A. Hutton

Table with 2 columns: Name, Page. Includes Home News, Overseas, Arts, Books, Business, Court, Crossword, Diary, Events, Law Report, Parliament, Science, Snow reports, Sport, TV & Radio, Theatres, etc.

Radioactive leak at Sellafield may lead to prosecution

By Philip Webster, Political Reporter

British Nuclear Fuels, the company which runs the nuclear reprocessing plant at Sellafield (formerly Windscale) in Cumbria, may be prosecuted over the abnormal discharges from its Irish Sea pipeline early last month which resulted in the formation of a radioactive slick.

The Director of Public Prosecutions has called in after investigations of the incident have disclosed that there may have been breaches of the law requiring exposures to the public from discharges to be kept 'as low as reasonably achievable' and proper records to be kept.

Mr Patrick Jenkin, Secretary of State for the Environment, announcing the DPP's involvement in the Commons yesterday, added that there may have been other breaches of the Nuclear Installations Inspectorate site licence.

He told MPs, however, that it was clear from the early inquiries that there had been no breach of the authorized limits on radioactive discharges, although he added that the Government was considering imposing still lower limits.

The company and its chief officers could be prosecuted under the Radioactive Substances Act of 1960, which governs the discharge of radioactive material into the sea. The penalties are a fine of up to £1,000 or up to three months' imprisonment on summary conviction, or on indictment, an unspecified fine, up to five years in prison or both.

Mr Jenkin also told the Commons that after an investigation by the National Radiological Protection Board, which analysed seaweed and other flotsam collected 10 miles on either side of the pipeline, that he could not withdraw his advice to the public against unnecessary use of the beaches for the time being.

Although it remained true that any risk of contamination to the public was extremely small, radioactive flotsam was still being found, he said.

At the same time a report has been published by Ministry of Agriculture scientists on the marine, environmental and agricultural consequences of the discharge. Summarizing it, Mr Jenkin said that it showed there had not been any significant effect on fish, shellfish and other foods, and that there was no reason why people should not eat local catches or farm produce.

The protection board concluded that radioactivity in the seaweed samples it examined was well below the level which would constitute a hazard to the general population, but its main concern was that anyone handling the more active samples taken from the beach could exceed the annual dose limit for

the skin after only brief direct contact. Mr Jenkin has referred the issue to the DPP after seeing early results of the investigations by the radiochemical inspectorate of the Department of the Environment and the Health and Safety Executive's nuclear installations inspectorate, which he promised would be published as soon as possible after they were received by ministers, 'provided there is no risk of prejudicing any legal proceedings'.

MPs of all parties expressed grave concern inside the House and outside about Mr Jenkin's statement. The ministers who referred to management error in the operation of the plant, that it was an accident which should not have happened.

The Greenpeace environment group said last night that the statement had been weak and indecisive. The only credible course for the Government to restore confidence in the plant would have been to stop discharges.

Mr Jenkin is understood to be highly likely to introduce lower discharge limits, not because they have been exceeded in this incident but because they were set on the assumption that there would be an even dispersal of radioactivity, and not a clustering effect as shown by the analysis of the seaweed.

Parliament, page 4

OECD forecasts UK recovery among fastest in Europe

From Frances Williams, Economics Correspondent, Paris

Britain's economy was said yesterday to be recovering faster than most countries in Europe, but with prospects of a sustained period of growth still threatened by continuing high interest rates and huge budget deficits in the United States.

This was among the main conclusions of the latest set of authoritative half-yearly economic forecasts from the Organization of Economic Cooperation and Development, the international club of leading industrialized countries. The OECD report is likely to be seen by Mrs Margaret Thatcher and other European leaders as useful ammunition in their efforts to persuade President Reagan to modify his economic policies.

The report, published in Paris, says that unemployment in Britain is likely to remain unchanged until 1985, but will continue to rise in the rest of Europe during that period. Britain can also expect economic growth of 2.25 per cent next year, 0.75 per cent lower than forecast by the Treasury, but still higher than every European country except Spain, Sweden, Finland and Switzerland.



Child crusader: A Shia boy displaying support for Ayatollah Khomeini during a demonstration in Beirut yesterday. Lebanon severed relations with Iran last month.

Five held in hunt for Harrods bombers

By Stewart Tendler

Five Irishmen were held for questioning in London and Manchester yesterday under the Prevention of Terrorism Act by detectives investigating the Provisional IRA bombing at Harrods. Police are also searching for a sixth man in the Midlands.

None of the men is thought to be directly involved in the Saturday's bombing, but detectives hope they may provide useful information. Four were arrested in north and west London, yesterday in an operation organized by the Special Branch and carried out by the branch anti-terrorist squad officers and the Special Patrol Group.

The four were taken to Paddington Green police station, considered the most secure London station and normally used for people held under the Prevention of Terrorism Act. No details were released about the four or about the fifth man held in Manchester.

At Scotland Yard, detectives under Commander William Huckleby, head of the anti-terrorist squad, were still trying to trace the movements of the Austin 1300 used to hold the bomb. Attempts have been made to produce an artist's impression of the man who bought the car from a part-time car dealer last month, but detectives are not yet happy that it should be issued.

Inquests on the five who died in the blast were opened yesterday by Dr Paul Knapman, the Westminster coroner, and adjourned to February 15. A number of the 95 people injured were seen in hospital yesterday. Inspector Stephen Dodd, aged 34, was in a critical but stable condition after an operation to remove a blood clot on the brain.

A fund for police victims of the bomb was set up yesterday to cope with money and gifts from well-wishers. More than £12,000 in cash and cheques has been sent to Chelsea police station. Two rooms have been needed to store Christmas hampers, drink and flowers sent in for the 13 injured officers from Chelsea and the families of the two dead.

Donations include £1,000 from a company, nearly £200 from residents of a local block of flats and 60p from three boys aged eight. Three Chicago policemen flew to London yesterday to honour the two police officers killed. Shopping crowds, page 2. Leading article, letters, page 11

Cabinet likely to reject calls to ban Sinn Fein

From Richard Ford, Belfast

The Cabinet is likely to take the advice of Mr James Prior, Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, and reject calls for banning Provisional Sinn Fein when it discusses the issue today at its last meeting before Christmas.

Mr Prior's warnings of the dangers involved in prescribing the Provisional IRA's political wing will be headed by ministers, and the postponement by Dr Garret FitzGerald's Government on imposing a ban in the Republic will also influence them.

However, the last document on which the Official Unionist politician, Mr Edgar Graham, was working when he was murdered, was published yesterday, calling for Provisional Sinn Fein's proscription, internment of its leaders and exclusion of its members from posts in public service.

Mr Graham had checked proofs of the paper on the night before he died, and it states: 'The reality is that they are a political front for the Provisional IRA and membership of the Provisional IRA and Sinn Fein is widely overlapping.' 'statements by Provisional Sinn Fein leaders reveal not only their support for violence but also their active encouragement of it.'

But Mr Prior said in Belfast that banning Provisional Sinn Fein was not the answer to the province's problems. He said thousands had voted for Provisional Sinn Fein and could work for their aims by peaceful democratic means. He had been in touch with Dublin since the Harrods bombing and favoured joint moves on security because the problem affected the whole island of Ireland.

Eight die in blast on French base in Beirut

From Robert Fisk, Beirut

At least one French soldier and seven civilians were killed and 17 other people were wounded last night in the latest attack on French troops of the multinational force in West Beirut.

In a pattern which has now become all too familiar to American and French soldiers here, a lorry was driven towards the heavily guarded and sand-bagged French base at Nasra not far from the old Beirut front line and the explosives on board were detonated a few seconds after the driver had leapt clear.

The bomb blasted down an apartment block and civil defence workers were last night hurrying into the ruins to search for civilian victims. The lorry rammed an earth embankment - specially built to protect the French from just such an attack - at the back of the schoolhouse - where the French troops are billeted. The soldiers there apparently had no time to fire at the driver before the attack. The explosion was so powerful that it blew a hole 20ft wide and 10ft deep into the road.

At almost exactly the same time, another bomb was thrown at a West Beirut bar where American Marines often drink. At least three people and wounding several others.

The Pickwick Bar, just off Hamra Street, was devastated in the explosion and the first police to reach the building found two of the bodies burning fiercely.

A US Marine guard from the American Embassy had been drinking in an adjoining room but was not hurt by the blast. The bomb's shrapnel, which were almost certainly carried out by Shia Muslim extremists, came at the end of a day in which Israeli jets had bombed Iranian and Shia militia positions around the eastern Lebanese city of Baalbek. Syrian troops fired barrages of missiles at the Israeli planes and the authorities in Damascus later claimed that seven civilians had been wounded, two of them seriously, when bombs exploded in the Shaikh Abdulak barracks south-east of Baalbek where Iranian revolutionary guards are living.

The barracks was captured from Lebanese soldiers earlier this year and was the target of a French air raid last month which failed to damage either the barracks or the buildings inside. The Israelis said that the Iranian position, the Israelis called it the terrorist base, had housed the men who planned both attacks on Israeli soldiers in Lebanon and on the multinational troops in Beirut.

The attacks in Beirut last night may thus have been intended as retaliation for the

Continued on back page, col 2

Dearer gas from New Year's Day

By David Young, Energy Correspondent

Gas prices are to rise by up to 4.3 per cent on New Year's Day, but standing charges have been pegged. Any further increases during 1984 have been ruled out by British Gas.

The cost of heating a typical three-bedroom home by gas central heating will rise by 26p a week and British Gas estimates that cooking costs for a family of four will rise by 2.5p a week.

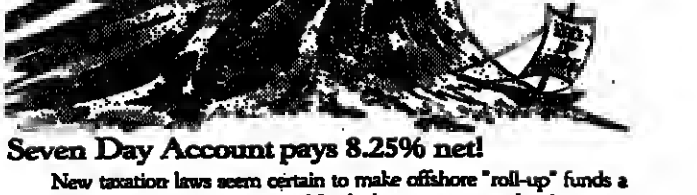
British Gas has also put back an increase in industrial gas contract prices from mid-January to April 1 'to continue to help British business in the fight against recession.'

The tariff changes is the first for 15 months and comes after confirmation that new financial targets have been agreed between British Gas and the Department of Energy.

In contrast with the electricity supply industry, which is opposing price increases to meet new government financial targets, British Gas emphasized yesterday that the price rise decision was its own and not the Government's.

British Gas also said that the increase was in line with its policy of setting a long-term pattern of modest increases to compensate for natural gas price rises. Letters, page 11

Abbey National have a haven for roll-up money



Seven Day Account pays 8.25% net! New taxation laws seem certain to make offshore 'roll-up' funds a lot less attractive from January 1. Now's the time to consider the alternatives. Where else can you enjoy a high return with ready access to your money? If you are a taxpayer, you will have to look a long way to beat the current rate offered by Abbey National's Seven Day Account.

Beats banks, markets, finance houses. Our rate of 8.25% net of basic rate tax, comfortably exceeds the net return from such commonly recommended 'convenient' high-interest deposits as money markets, local authorities and Coiffe-quoted finance houses. As for conventional clearing bank deposits, our net even exceeds their gross!

Only seven days notice. Whether you consider it as a permanent harbour or temporary haven, the Seven Day Account will welcome you back on shore. Your money is readily available on seven days notice of withdrawal, with no financial penalties whatever for withdrawal.

Form for Abbey National Seven Day Account. Includes fields for Name, Address, Postcode, Signature, Date, and a 'Go to it' button.

Abbey National Building Society, FREEPOST, United Kingdom House, 180 Oxford Street, London W1E 5YZ. I/we enclose a cheque, numbered... to be invested in a Seven Day Account at my/our local branch in... I/we understand that the rate may vary.

GLC 'apartheid' may hit stars

By David Hewson, Arts Correspondent

The GLC's ruling Labour group hopes to ban entertainers who have performed in South Africa from council premises. The ban, which would also apply to athletes appearing at Crystal Palace and other GLC-owned sports tracks, would affect entertainers like Frank Sinatra and Shirley Bassey, and classical conductors and soloists.

A number of performers could find themselves banned from the Festival Hall if the move goes ahead, the London promoter, Mr Raymond Gubbay, said last night. 'I don't think any promoter would easily accept that he could not choose the people he employs like this', Mr Gubbay said. 'My reaction is one of some degree of shock. We engage artists for what they are and not for their politics.'

Mr Kenneth Livingstone, the GLC leader, said he would be pressing for the ban as part of the GLC's efforts to make 1984 'Anti-Racist Year'. The council also plans to name streets and buildings after anti-apartheid campaigners. The GLC last night said it would receive an officer's report next month on how far the ban could be legally imposed. Show business promoters thought the main victims of any ban would be middle-of-the-road entertainers in one-night shows at the Festival Hall. Many stars like Spike Milligan and Cliff Richard had accepted work in South Africa.

Abbey National have a haven for roll-up money



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The maximum investment is £30,000 (£60,000 for joint accounts). The minimum just £100. Come in out of the storm!

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Threatened council's chief accuses Whitehall of distorting budget evidence

By Hugh Clayton
Local Government Correspondent

Mr John Gunnell, leader of West Yorkshire County Council, yesterday accused the Government of "deliberate falsification of evidence" in its efforts to abolish all English metropolitan county councils, including his own.

Mr Gunnell came to London armed with the first of two reports prepared by the Coopers & Lybrand management consultancy, which claimed that some of the evidence put forward by the Government in the autumn was misleading.

Ministers then published a White Paper called *Sireaming the Cities* proposing the abolition of the English metropolitan county councils and the Greater London Council in 1986. Coopers & Lybrand were commissioned to make an independent study of the plans by the county authorities designated for abolition. They are West and South Yorkshire, Greater Manchester, West Midlands, Merseyside and Tyne and Wear.

The consultants claimed that ministers had overestimated the amount of "overspend" by metropolitan councils compared with the performance of other English county councils. That was because they had underestimated differences in spending patterns.

Most county councils devoted half of their budgets to education, where inflation had been restrained by falling numbers of children. Only about an eighth of their budgets

Increase in council spending 1979-83 (%)		
	Metropolitan counties	All other councils
Government figures	111	83
Coopers & Lybrand	86	78

(Coopers & Lybrand figures adjusted for different council spending patterns. GLC excluded throughout.)

went on police and fire services, where inflation had been more severe because of government demands for expansion and where many costs were controlled by the Home Office and not by councillors.

But the metropolitan councils threatened with abolition used more than a third of their budgets on police and fire services. For them, therefore, much more expense was governed by the Government instead of by councillors. The consultants also said that the White Paper exaggerated the difference in increases in rate demands between metropolitan counties and English councils in general.

"I believe that the White Paper is deliberately deceptive and that the Government has knowingly ignored the statistics," Mr Gunnell said. "We have over 40 per cent of our expenditure in Home Office services. Police and fire pay settlements are higher than in the rest of the public sector."

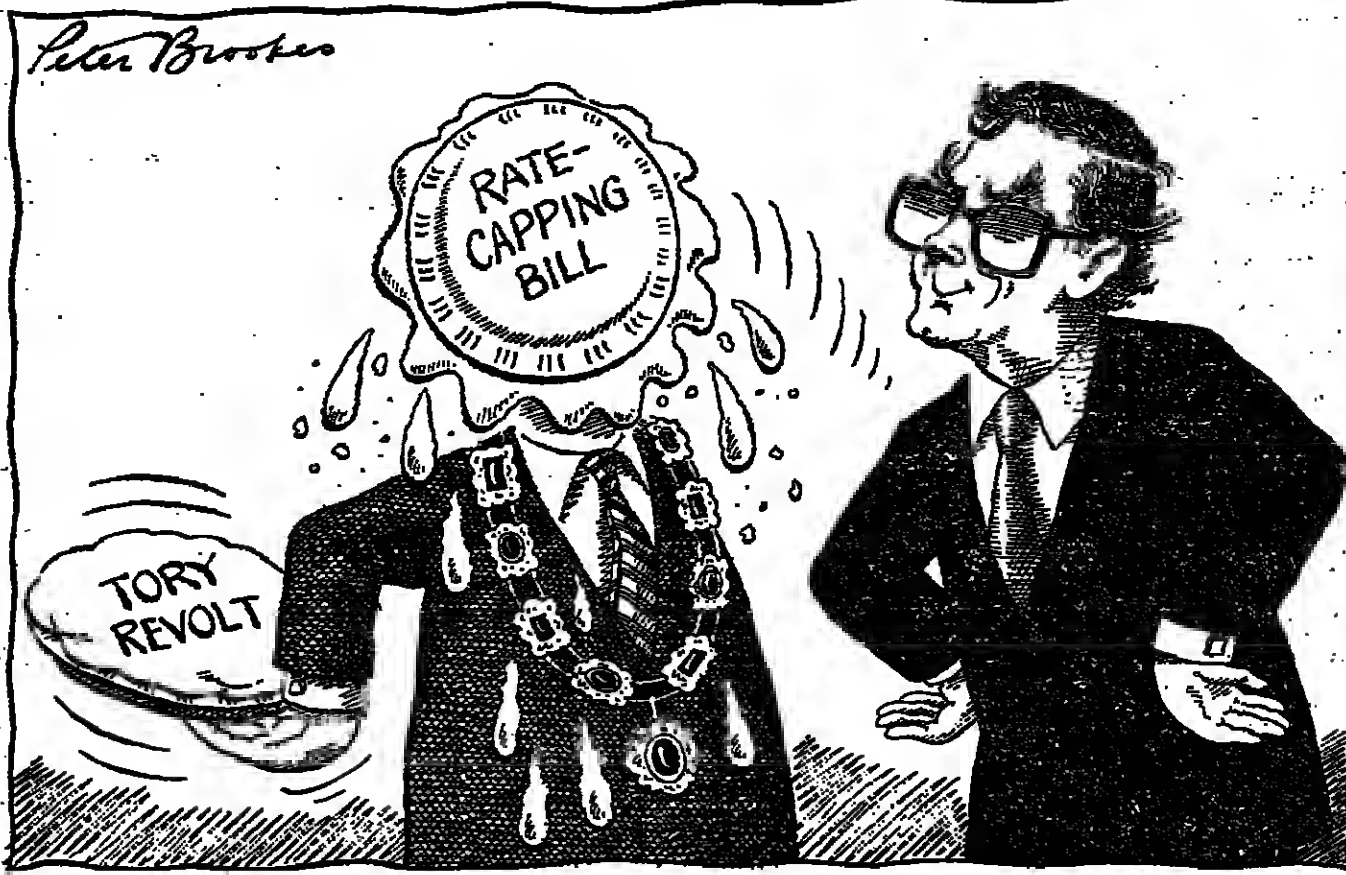
Mr Gunnell said that the first part of the consultants' study, published yesterday, had cost £40,000. The second part, about the costs of abolition, would appear early next year and would cost £30,000 for each of the six threatened councils.

The London Borough of Hackney was given leave in the High Court yesterday to seek a ruling that the target spending figure given to councillors by the Government last week was unlawful because it was too low to enable them to do their statutory duties. Hackney, which claims to be the poorest local authority area in the country, rejects government claims that high-spending councils can make further savings without cutting essential services.

More attacks on rate-capping Bill

The National and Local Government Officers' Association (Nalgo) said yesterday that the Government's plan to impose rate ceilings on high-spending local councils could cost 300,000 jobs. The Trades Union Congress expressed "total opposition" to proposals in the Government's rates bill to impose their ceilings by "capping" rates.

Mr Len Murray, general secretary of the TUC, said that it wanted to start a joint campaign against the Bill with associations of local councils and curb their freedom to provide the services they felt fitted local needs, he said.



Oxford test of health staff freeze

From Nicholas Timmins, Social Services Correspondent, Oxford

Plans for a radical shift in health care from hospitals to the community over the next decade are to be put to Oxford Regional Health Authority next month.

One result of the changes will be a significant increase in staff, up to more than 4,000, with an increase of 36 per cent to 4,330 in the number involved in community services.

With the Government attempting to freeze National Health Service manpower at about its present level, the proposals will provide a key test of whether health ministers are prepared to see manpower rise to provide the type of community based service that the Department of Health is advocating.

The plans envisage a doubling of day care treatment in the region to 25 per cent of all acute cases, with shorter stays in hospital for maternity patients, in a package that will cost about £11m from projected speeding on acute services by 1994.

Large mental illness and mental handicap hospitals in the region, including Fair Mile, St Crispin, St John's, Borocourt and Littlemore hospitals, would be closed, or reduced in size, being replaced by community-based units and more care at home, both for those patients and the elderly.

Spending on those groups would rise by about £19m, which is £8m more than if the services continued in their present pattern.

A large investment would be put into health education in an attempt to cut treatment for cancer and heart disease by 25 per cent over the 10 years, by persuading people to stop smoking, and eat a healthier diet.

The proposals would mean an increase of about 13 per cent in staff at a time when the region's population is expected to rise by about 11 per cent.

With almost 30 per cent of the region's buildings classed as being in a poor state of repair, the strategic plan envisages disposing of outdated ones, including remote large institutions. Land sales should raise £22m in the next decade.

Dr Ronnie Pollock, the Oxford region's specialist in community medicine, said the region believed it could achieve the change without local authority services having to spend more. "This is not an attempt to pass the responsibility to local authorities."

The plans were criticized by the "Who Cares" campaign, set up by ten trade unions in the region.

Crowds 'thinned' by Harrods bomb

By Robin Young

Despite the Home Secretary's declaration that not to go shopping in the West End of London this Christmas was to be handing a victory to the IRA, there was little doubt among the general public in Oxford Street, Regent Street and Knightsbridge yesterday that the last-minute shopping crowds had been deterred by Saturday's bomb explosion at Harrods.

Regular shoppers, bus conductors, taxi drivers and staff at Piccadilly Circus and Oxford Circus Underground stations were all agreed that the crowds were appreciably thinner than in previous years. Store managements, however, insisted that the impression was a false one, not borne out by their trading figures.

Harrods itself was clearly busier than it had been on Monday, when the comparatively few shoppers were congratulating each other on having come to "the safest place in London".

Staff admitted, though, that the shop was considerably quieter than would have been expected in the normal pre-Christmas rush. "Usually you cannot move in here at this time of year," one senior staff member said. "At least it is a bit more comfortable for the faithful who have come". The management declined to quote their takings.

Selfridge's, however, claimed to be busier than last week and much busier than last year.

seem quieter, insisted they had no figures to bear it out. "For us it has simply been a very good Christmas, especially in the gift and speciality food lines".

For Liberty in Regent Street it was claimed that figures were showing "a most satisfactory increase" on the same period last year. "We do not feel that our customers have been deterred, and we are now preparing our biggest ever post-Christmas sale."

This last will be good news for my taxi driver who said: "I decided not to go to the shops before Christmas this year, but to give my family promissory notes for the winter sales. I do not call that a victory for the IRA. I call it a victory for good sense and sound economy."

The Arts Council yesterday withdrew a £1.750 guarantee for

a concert at Queen Elizabeth Hall, London, after it discovered that posters for the event contained references to the IRA (Our Arts Correspondent writes).

Sir William Rees-Mogg, the Arts Council chairman, said: "The concert as originally planned appeared to consist of unexceptionable twentieth-century music. However, the main piece in the concert was described as Agitprop with the clear implication that purpose is to make political propaganda in favour of the IRA. This is unacceptable."

The guarantee was given to a London promoter, Matchless Music for a concert by the Eisler Collective on January 19. The poster produced by Matchless Music for the event showed a picture of a woman backed by the slogan "IRA - Long Kesh".

The central part of the concert was to have been an adaptation of Brecht's *The Mother* by John Arden and Margaretta D'Arcy, the husband and wife writers who live in Ireland and have espoused republican causes in the past.

Matchless Music refused to comment. Stocks of blood at the South London Transfusion Centre at Tooting, almost exhausted by demand after the Harrods bombing, were renewed yesterday by transfers of 200 pints each from centres in Southampton and Bristol and the Army's blood supply depot at Aldershot.

Leading article and letters, page 11



Mr Leon Brittan: Advice unheeded

Surgeons set for more heart-lung transplants

By Thomson Prentice, Medical Reporter

Heart and lung transplants will continue to be carried out in Britain despite the death of Mr Lars Ljungberg, the first heart-lung patient in this country. The next patient is likely to be a seriously ill woman who has been assessed as suitable for the operation.

Mr Ljungberg, aged 32, a Swedish journalist, died in Harefield Hospital, west London, on Tuesday night, 14 days after the operation. Death was due to the failure of his kidneys and other organs, the hospital said.

The surgical team was headed by Mr Magdi Youssif, who has performed 89 heart transplants, the most recent being six days ago. Mr Youssif was yesterday to be "very disappointed, but determined to carry on".

The operation on Mr Ljungberg was considered to be a

NGA thwart computer innovation

By David Cross

The National Graphical Association (NGA) has thwarted what would have been a breakthrough in the use of computer technology in the newspaper industry.

Coastalpress, a small publishing company, launched a new tabloid newspaper for motor cycling enthusiasts a month ago when it thought was the blessing of the NGA for journalists to do most of the work normally carried out by printers.

Instead of writing their stories on typewriters and then passing them to NGA members for setting into type, the journalists would have typed their words directly on to computer discs for direct input to a typesetting computer. Indeed, the first edition of *Motorcycling Weekly*, with a print run of about 70,000 copies was set fully by journalists, with NGA members adding typesetting instructions before the material was turned into type.

But when national officials of the NGA in Bedford discovered how the new weekly was being printed, they intervened to stop the practice.

As a result subsequent editions of the newspaper have been printed with NGA members setting the type for the computer. Mr Chris Harding, an NGA national officer, said yesterday that there had been a "misunderstanding" between Mr Bill Thomson, managing director of Coastalpress, and London Regional officials of the NGA.

While discussions on the possibility of a "mutually beneficial understanding and agreement" on the issue of single key-stroke production methods with Coastalpress would continue, the journal was not prepared to allow journalists at the company to set type at the present time, Mr Harding said.

Correction

Our report on Tuesday of a Restrictive Practices Court judgment referring to the need to have a qualified person in all retail agencies of the Association of British Travel Agents should have stated that the court concluded that the period proposed by ABTA for acquiring the necessary practical experience was right, not that the court gave an indication of a minimum length of practical experience.

Intruder found twice at Spencer home

By A Staff Reporter

The police have tightened security at the former home of the Princess of Wales after the discovery of a man aged 21 in the private apartments of Lady Spencer, the princess's stepmother.

Mr Maurice Buck, Chief Constable of Northamptonshire, said last night that the intruder had been found by a member of staff inside Althorp House on December 10. A week later he was discovered inside the grounds by the west lodge.

Nunn wins chess prize

From Harry Golombek, Chess Correspondent, Brighton

First prize in the Computer Games Ltd international tournament in Brighton was won on Tuesday by the English international grandmaster, John Nunn, with the excellent score of seven out of nine.

British players occupied the first four places. Final scores were Nunn 7, Short and Watson 6, Hodson 5, Westerman (Finland) 4, Flasket (England) and Mednis (USA) 4.

The results in the last round were: Nunn ½, Flasket ½, Ivanov ½, Westerman ½, Hodson ½, Mednis ½, Watson 1 Short 0. The game between Muriel and Burger was unfinished but looked hopeless for the Israeli. Short's loss to Watson in the last round was doubly unfortunate for him. He needed a win both to overhaul Nunn and to gain the seven points necessary for a grandmaster norm. This would have given him the title of grandmaster as he already obtained grandmaster norms in two tournaments.

Short never looked likely to win against Watson. He had black and played a French Defence to reach a wretched position. In his attempt to complicate matters he made his position worse. Intending to castle queenside he touched his king, then realizing that to castle he would have to break the rules and move across a line government by an enemy piece he promptly resigned.

Moderates see NUM poll as verdict on left

By Paul Routledge, Labour Editor

Moderate leaders of the National Union of Mineworkers are turning next month's election for a general secretary into a test of rank and file opinion about Mr Arthur Scarth's left wing policies.

Mr John Walsh, aged 46, NUM full time agent for the north Yorkshire coalfield, who has been selected as the standard bearer of the right, is campaigning on a ticket of "negotiation not confrontation".

He said yesterday that the present pay dispute between the union and the National Coal Board could be solved by a compromise formula, which he will not disclose unless he is elected general secretary in the secret pit head ballot on January 20.

Mr Walsh is fighting a three-cornered contest against Mr Les Kelly, a branch official from Beal, of Ayr colliery, north Wales, and Mr Peter Heathfield aged 54, secretary of the Derbyshire miners, the candidate of the left and the favoured NUM's executive decision not to hold a ballot on whether to continue the action.

More than 40 winders who do maintenance work at six pits in North Staffordshire are ready to work a normal six day shift system from January 7.



Mr John Walsh: moderate contender

Pensions 'robbery' attacked

By Our Political Staff

Mr John Daly, general secretary of the National and Local Government Officers' Association, said last night that a Treasury plan to increase pensions contributions by 2 per cent of pay for local government workers was "downright robbery".

"It would be nothing but a 2 per cent wage cut aimed at milking public service workers of some £350m as a kind of taxation through the back door."

The proposal, which would affect 1,060,000 local government workers, 820,000 National Health Service employees and 613,000 teachers, is not connected with a report from the Government Actuary this week which said that there should be a 1.05 per cent increase in contributions to the teachers' superannuation scheme from next April.

That report stated that the employers should pay an additional 0.25 per cent, but left to Sir Keith Joseph, Secretary of State for Education, apportionment of the remaining 0.8 per cent which is required to make good a balance of liability, a deficiency, of £2,390m in the fund.

Teachers' unions warned the Government yesterday that they would oppose any attempt to increase their pension contributions by 2 per cent of pay (the Press Association reports).

Teachers contribute 6 per cent of their earnings. They dislike the scheme because they say the money is paid into a national fund administered by the Government which in return guarantees their pension.

Mr Nigel de Gruchy, deputy general secretary of the National Association of Schoolmasters/Union of Women Teachers, said that teachers were not getting value for money.

New clue in tracing how cancer starts

By Clive Cookson

Another important step towards understanding how cancer starts is announced today.

A group of researchers at Imperial College, London, supported by the Cancer Research Campaign, report in the journals *Nature* and *Cell* the discovery of a number of genes which are switched on in all tumour cells but not in normal cells.

The team, headed by Dr Peter Rigby, has identified one of those genes as coming from the group associated with the body's immune defence mechanism.

The gene turns out normally

to be switched on only in the embryo's dramatic illustration of the long-suspected similarity between cancer cells and embryo cells in the early stages of development.

An editorial in *Nature* says that Dr Rigby's paper is "plainly of the utmost importance, but for reasons which at this stage are not fully apparent".

The implications are important for understanding not only the molecular basis of cancer but also how the immune system works, and how cells of different tissues acquire their specialized functions.

Protection law proposed for British inventions

By Bill Johnstone, Electronics Correspondent

Inventions in biotechnology and medicine and innovations resulting from small companies' efforts in principal areas in which a new patenting Act will be needed to give British scientists proper protection.

The Prime Minister, Mrs Margaret Thatcher, is studying this recommendation by the Cabinet Office Chief Scientific Adviser, Dr Robie Nicholson. The conclusions are in a report published by the Government this week.

On biotechnology the study says living organisms are difficult to isolate from nature and impossible to define adequately in written specifications. As a result, the disclosure necessary for patenting is carried out by depositing some of the actual organisms where third parties can examine it.

The new law would be

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Commentary

Geoffrey Smith

It might seem out of proportion to ascribe too much significance to Mr David Steel's decision not to address the Liberal candidate's annual conference at Oxford next month. He is reluctant to tie himself down because the dates have not yet been fixed for his Moscow visit, and the conference is at an awkward time for him anyway.

Yet it is hard to believe that these would be sufficient reasons for his declining to make even a tentative commitment if he were really eager to speak to his troops. One might have expected him to be there are the people who will be in the front line at the next election, and this would surely be a good opportunity for him to rally their spirits after the disappointment of the last election and the uncertainties over his own intentions that followed so soon after.

So this episode, trivial though it might appear, raises the question as to whether he really still has the appetite for the wearisome task of leading a smaller party. There is no reason to doubt his health. He has fully recovered his fitness after his summer collapse, whatever it was. Nor is there any reason to doubt his intention to lead the Liberals into the next election. Above all, there is no doubt that he is the best man for the job, provided that he still has the zest.

Exaggerated hopes, excessive deflation

But has he? He was not only tired and unwell during the summer. He was also fed up, not least with his party. Much of the trouble, I suspect, was that he and they were more disappointed than they should have been by the election results. They had exaggerated hopes and consequently felt excessively deflated. Their thoughts revolved on how few seats they have now in the new Parliament rather than on the opportunity presented by the number of votes they have won.

Even if its support was inflated by tactical and protest voting, the Alliance did win only 2 per cent fewer votes than Labour. That must give it a chance. If Labour should stumble or appear as the serious opposition to the Conservatives, it may not be a great opportunity, but it is there all right.

If it is to be seized, however, there will have to be a massive effort by the Alliance. Mr Steel is conscious of being in a long-distance race. He feels the need to pace himself, and he is well aware that public attention is bound to be directed for a while more towards the new party leaders, Mr Kinnoch and Dr Owen, simply because they are new in their posts.

More opportunity for SDP leader

These are all reasonable arguments for not pushing too hard too soon. Yet the life of the leader of a smaller party has to be one of unremitting effort. He has much less backup than the leader of a major party, but he usually has to do even more to provide inspiration and a sense of strategy to his followers. It is bound to be hard for any man to maintain his pitch of enthusiasm high enough for long enough, especially if the lights of office remain tantalizingly distant.

So it is scarcely surprising if Mr Steel has lost a bit of his élan for the moment. This gives Dr Owen an additional opportunity to provide *de facto* leadership for the Alliance. He has performed well in the House of Commons and in the country since becoming leader of the SDP. But nobody can lead a team if he is not fully identified with it. Just as President Carter found that he could not run the Federal Government effectively so long as he continued to campaign against it, so Dr Owen cannot give the Alliance all the leadership it requires so long as he has a slightly semi-detached attitude towards it.

The Alliance needs the truth. If Mr Steel is not for a while quite so energetic as he has been, perhaps this will make his party appreciate how much it and the Alliance has benefited from his strong leadership in the past. Some-times a leader needs to receive as well as to give encouragement.

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Australia \$28.00; Belgium \$18.00; Canada \$27.00; Denmark 125.00; France 125.00; Germany 125.00; Greece 125.00; Hong Kong 125.00; India 125.00; Italy 125.00; Japan 125.00; Korea 125.00; Luxembourg 125.00; Malaysia 125.00; Mexico 125.00; Netherlands 125.00; New Zealand 125.00; Norway 125.00; Portugal 125.00; Singapore 125.00; South Africa 125.00; Spain 125.00; Sweden 125.00; Switzerland 125.00; Taiwan 125.00; Thailand 125.00; USA \$18.00; West Germany 125.00.

WPC wins sex bias case against police but is censured at tribunal

The police woman at the centre of a sex discrimination dispute won her case yesterday, but was severely censured by the tribunal chairman.

WPC Constable Wendy de Launay, the traffic officer who was banned from working with married male colleagues last February, won her claim for sexual discrimination and victimisation at the London South Industrial Tribunal.

But Mr Geoffrey Higgs, the chairman, declined to make an award for injured feelings and criticized WPC de Launay for not first taking her grievance through the police complaint procedure.

Mr Higgs said that the decision to ban WPC de Launay, aged 25, from her "posted partnership" with Police Constable Trevor Atfield, an experienced traffic officer aged 31, was sexual discrimination, and her return last October to foot patrol in Fulham, west London, was victimisation.

He added that her transfer was a direct result of her complaint to the Equal Opportunities Commission. "She was subjected to sexual discrimination and has made out her case on all counts", Mr Higgs said. He reserved the reasons for the decision.

Mr Higgs then made a statement, saying the case was of considerable public interest. "The parties themselves are not beyond criticism in the way they have handled the situation."

Miss de Launay is a member

of a disciplined police force and she saw the problem of a relationship with PC Atfield and she should have understood that it was a matter of genuine concern to Chief Superintendent Brian Wallace regarding discipline at the Hampton, Middlesex, garage.

Mr Higgs said that WPC de Launay should have referred the problem to the commander of the police of West division or, if necessary, other senior officers under the orders and regulations.

"Miss de Launay also instituted the proceedings without giving prior notice in Chief Superintendent Wallace," he said.

"The fact that her conduct may be criticized is not a justification for Chief Superintendent Wallace to discriminate against her in the way he did, except that he was faced with a general problem."

"We find that she failed to consider the problem closely and seemed to have over-reacted."

Mr Higgs said that the tribunal sympathized with WPC de Launay for the distress she had suffered from the sexual discrimination but it was not appropriate to make a compensatory award.

He adjourned the hearing to give both parties time to "cool off" and the Commissioner time to consider returning WPC de Launay to the traffic division.

Mr Higgs added: "It might be a good thing if the dust was allowed to settle before we



Duty calls: WPC Wendy de Launay, whose claim of sexual discrimination was accepted by a London tribunal yesterday.

Fire risk claim over 'silly string' aerosol

By David Nicholson-Lord

Many homes could face a serious fire risk at Christmas from aerosol cans of "silly string", a supposedly innocuous solvent-based streamer designed to make parties go with a swing.

Tests on one brand indicated that, contrary to the producer's claims, it remained flammable long after being sprayed.

Hundreds of thousands of cans are sold. Concern arose after a London businessman contacted *The Times* with details of tests on one brand, Swan Fun String, produced by Porth Textiles, of South Wales.

Mr Ronald Collins, managing director of a telecommunications company and a member of the Institute of Patentees and Inventors, noticed that the string turned brown and shrivelled when Christmas tree lights were switched on near it. When he applied a lighted cigarette to it, it burst into flames and dropped hot plastic on to his hand.

Mr Collins, who has worked in fire testing, said: "People spray this stuff on to hair and clothes as well as Christmas trees. But there is no warning on the can that it is highly inflammable."

Porth Textiles, Britain's biggest producer of decorations and plastic Christmas trees, was put into the hands of the receiver earlier this month with £8m debts. The company said yesterday that the can carried the obligatory warning against spraying near a naked flame. Mr Gareth Evans, its quality control manager, said that string contained resins and solvent and might remain flammable for up to two hours while the solvent remained wet. After that it would become crumbly and non-flammable.

There had been "no reports whatsoever" of fires involving silly string.

Mr Collins, however, has found that it was possible to set light to the string two days after it was sprayed.

Householders were also warned yesterday about dangerously high lead and chromium levels in paint on toys imported from Hongkong. Trading standards officers in Merseyside found up to 43 times the maximum safe lead levels on toy cars which bear the name "Shekema".

Special precautions against extra fire risks at Christmas were called for yesterday. The Home Office advises householders to keep all decorations well clear of fires and lights, check plugs and wiring and provide plenty of ashtrays.

'Christmas in custody' drink-drive warning

By Michael Horsnell

The chairman of Grays magistrates in Essex, who have jailed 11 motorists for drinking and driving in the past week, gave a warning yesterday that offenders could spend Christmas in custody.

Mr Charles Noad, aged 63, a retired businessman, said: "We can not let false sentimentality stand in our way, despite the approach of Christmas. The fact that you are a first offender does not give you a licence to drink and drive and expect the courts to be lenient."

"So far as discrepancies are concerned, courts have to look at the gravity of the offence and the alcohol reading. But it would be helpful if there were greater consistency throughout the country."

"Disqualification and fining were not having the required effect. We would like to stop it being respectable to drink and drive. It is a most anti-social activity which causes death and serious injury."

Earlier yesterday, David Jones, aged 21, was sentenced to two days in a police cell, fined £300 and banned from driving for 18 months by the presiding magistrate, Mr George Walsham.

Jones, an electrician, from South Ockendon, Essex, crashed through a garden hedge after a Guy Fawkes party. An intoximeter showed that he had 63 micrograms of alcohol per 100 millilitres of breath - the legal limit is 35 micrograms.

His mother, Mrs Joyce Jones, aged 47, said afterwards: "I think it is disgusting. Admittedly he was over the limit, but not all that much. The fine would have been quite enough."

Earlier, Mr Walsham fined Mark Corthine, aged 22, a test driver for Ford, £250 for driving with 54 micrograms of alcohol. Corthine, from Stanford le Hope, Essex, was also disqualified from driving for 15 months.

He said afterwards: "The crack-down is diabolical. The police should tell people before they introduce these new measures."

He said that the wide variation in sentencing by courts tempted more people to drink and drive. "It is important that the drivers know they will be imprisoned."

Mr Edward Taylor, Conservative MP for Southend East, called yesterday for the introduction of mandatory prison sentences for drink-drive offences (the Press Association reports).

Costs disputed in shoplifting case

A magistrate refused costs to Tesco, the supermarket chain, yesterday when it dropped a charge against a widow, aged 73 - but he changed his decision after prosecution protests.

Mrs Hilda Cleavley, of Bentworth Road, Bethnal Green, had been accused at Thames Magistrates' Court of stealing groceries worth £2.74.

Mr Paul Jones, prosecuting, said Tesco would drop the charge if Mrs Cleavley agreed to be bound over. Mrs Cleavley agreed and was bound over for one year.

The magistrate, Sir Bryan Roberts, refused costs over a case involving £2.74.

Mrs Cleavley said she had intended pleading not guilty and electing trial but accepted the binding order to avoid further pressure.

Mr Jones re-applied for cost, accusing Sir Bryan of issuing a thieves' charter and punishing Tesco for its compassion.

He argued that costs could be refused only if the prosecution had misconducted itself. He said the store detective saw Mrs Cleavley place goods from the shelves in her bag without paying.

The cost of 2 damaged young lives

Two young men who are severely handicapped after being injured in road accidents were yesterday awarded damages in two separate cases in the High Court.

Mr John Fitzgerald, aged 20, of Canterbury Road, Morden, Surrey, was awarded £318,168 for injuries he received when a car in which he was a passenger crashed in October, 1980.

Patrick Mahoney, aged 17, of Clark Street, Whitechapel, east London, was awarded £204,930 after he was knocked down by a crash on a pelican crossing in August, 1976.

Mr Fitzgerald was 17 when he suffered irreversible brain damage which impaired his memory and concentration.

He will never be able to go back to his job as an apprentice carpenter or enjoy table tennis and judo, which he excelled.

Mr Justice Park, who made the award, said that before the accident Mr Fitzgerald had been "lively, vivacious and enterprising, had a pleasant personality and was a smashing kid with a lovely sense of humour".

Now he was only able to do simple tasks and relied on the devotion of his father, Mr Fredrick Fitzgerald, aged 64, and in most respects would be helpless without him. When his father was no longer capable of caring for him he would need a full-time nurse, the judge said.

The damages are to be paid by the driver of the car in which Mr Fitzgerald was a rear seat passenger when it skidded, demolished a road sign and lamp post and then overturned in London Road, Morden. The driver, Mr Kevin White, of Chester Gardens, Morden, admitted liability.

Patrick Mahoney was 10 years old and on his way to swimming baths near his home when a coach struck him as he walked across the pelican crossing.

Head injuries initially left him totally paralysed but he has since regained some movement in his right leg and left arm.

Mr Justice Skinner, who made the award, said that Patrick was 25 per cent disabled because he failed to look properly.

The damages are to be paid by the owners of the coach, Frank Harris Coaches, of Grays, Essex, who admitted liability.

Costs inquiry urged for universities

By Lucy Hodges, Education Correspondent

A Rayner-style inquiry into the efficiency of the universities has been proposed by Sir Keith Joseph, the Secretary of State for Education, at the direct prodding of the Prime Minister, who is known to be dubious about their parsimony.

The proposal, to be discussed further next month by civil servants, the University Grants Committee and the Committee of Vice-Chancellors and Principals (CVCP), is that a firm of outside consultants, such as Peak, Marwick and Mitchell, or Arthur Anderson, would look at the management of a number of universities.

"The CVCP is most anxious that any such inquiry should be conducted under the aegis of the universities, but this may not meet with government approval. Although the universities, which eat up £1,400m of public funds annually, are not shunning an inquiry, they do feel they have examined themselves rigorously in the past few years and have cut back as much as they can."

The idea at present is that the inquiry would look at whether the universities provide value for money, but it is not thought likely that staff performance or quality of research would be examined. Items such as estate management and building maintenance would be looked at, as would staff-student ratios.

There are known to be wide disparities in these ratios between institutions in the same subject. Mrs Margaret Thatcher is said to view the universities with some disapproval and to feel that they teach subjects which are not academically rigorous.

She is also understood to be impatient with the universities' pleas for money. There is no certainty, however, that an exercise of the kind Lord Rayner conducted in the Civil Service would produce recommendations for savings. It might say that aspects of the university system were seriously underfunded.

The idea for the review, which was raised at last week's private meeting between Sir Keith and the CVCP, will probably also encompass the way in which resources are allocated by the universities. The decision-making mechanisms of institutions will also come under scrutiny.

Mr Brian Taylor, secretary to the CVCP, said they were prepared for anyone to look at their efficiency, because they had been very efficient. "But we want to find a way in which this can be done under the aegis of the universities".

An efficiency survey of the universities would differ from previous Rayner-style inquiries in that it is felt it could not be carried out by civil servants. In order to carry authority with all concerned it would need to be conducted by a respected group of specialists from outside government.

Duke seeks return of heirlooms

The Duke of Manchester yesterday won the first round of his High Court battle with his elderly stepmother for the return of missing family heirlooms. The Vice-Chancellor, Sir Robert Megarry, ordered an inquiry to find out what heirlooms are left and where they are.

The missing heirlooms, said to be worth millions of pounds, include paintings by Holbein and Van Dyck, and the Duke aged 54, claims them as his right under a family trust, set up in 1923 by his grandfather.

But the Dowager Duchess of Manchester, now in her seventies, and living in Eaton Square, Belgravia, claims that any possessions she has inherited when the tenth Duke died, aged 75, in 1977.

The matter was adjourned to the new year for further argument. The case has already lasted 11 days. The eleventh Duke, who lives in Kenya, was not in court.

Police chief guilty of 'kerb-crawling'

The head of Lincolnshire fraud squad was bound over to be of good behaviour for 12 months yesterday after being convicted of "kerb-crawling" in Nottingham's red light district.

Det Chief Insp Robert Warner, aged 49, who had denied the offence at Nottingham Magistrates' Court, agreed to be bound over with a surety of £100.

Mr David Blundell, for the prosecution, said that Warner was cautioned after approaching Woman Police Constable Janet Walker, who was in plainclothes and on vice squad duty in Hyson Green last September.

Warner, a father of three, from Welton, near Lincoln, told the court that he had realized immediately that WPC Walker, aged 30, was a policewoman.

Mr Blundell said that Warner approached her and asked her how much it would be for "straight sex".

But Warner said that he thought that WPC Walker had been attacked by a man in Hardy Street and had asked if he could help her.

"I was not kerb crawling in the general sense. I was going down the kerb slowly stopping and starting."

He said that he had lost his way in Nottingham while travelling from Lincoln to Ilkeston. He told the court: "I was not even aware that you had a red light district in Nottingham."

"I did not know that Hardy Street formed a part of that red light district. It was not signposted as a red-light district; these places never are."

Warner refused to name the man he said he was on his way to visit in Ilkeston.

Mr Dick Fletcher, for the defence, said that Warner was a man of integrity and honesty who had been awarded the police long service and good conduct medal.

Warner will face an internal police disciplinary procedure, and could be demoted or asked to resign.

The head of the Lincolnshire CID, Detective Chief Superintendent Colin Bailey, told the court that Warner was an excellent detective who could lose a pension worth tens of thousands of pounds because of his court appearance.

He said that Warner had been 28 years in the force and had 22 months to go before becoming eligible for retirement.

The civil case was brought by police under the Justices of the Peace Act, 1936.

It followed a clampdown on kerb crawling in Hyson Green during which dozens of motorists were cautioned and brought before the courts.

Detectives praised for not shooting gunman

Flying Squad detectives were praised by a judge yesterday for their restraint in not firing back at a "mad criminal" who was firing a sawn-off shotgun at them.

Judge Brian Gibbons told the Central Criminal Court that if they had done so people in the crowded Chapel Market, Islington, north London, could have been killed. He congratulated Det Sergeant Kelly, aged 30, for his courage in disarming him.

James Daly, aged 29, of Mora Street, Islington, suspected of having IRA links, was jailed for 17 years.

He was convicted of conspiring to rob security guards in Chapel Market and shooting Det Kelly in the face.

Daly, wanted for questioning in connection with a £100,000 robbery in Dublin in which two policemen were shot, was also found guilty of shooting and robbing a security guard, Christopher Sandford, of £10,000 outside a bank in Penge, south London.

The judge said that Mr Sandford, aged 28, had only survived because a doctor and nurse were near by. He still had 90 pellets in his stomach.



Det Sergeant Kelly: Disarmed "mad criminal".

Woodlands threatened

By John Young, Agriculture Correspondent

Britain's remaining ancient woodlands are being destroyed at a rate unprecedented in peacetime, a report published today claims.

In some counties up to 60 per cent of the semi-natural woodland cover has been removed since the war, a high proportion of that in the past 15 years.

The report is published by the British Association of Nature Conservationists and its author, Mr Richard Grove, says there is a developing crisis in the relationship between forestry and nature conservation.

Decisions made in the near future will determine the form of the British countryside for a long time to come.

The Future for Forestry (BANF, c/o Rectory Farm, Stanton St John, Oxford, E3).

Rhododendrons, for which Snowdonia is famous, are choking new growth in woods and forests. The Snowdonia national park authority is sending leaflets to youth hostels and tourist centers explaining why it is necessary to keep the spread in check.

Punks chop logs for old people

Out-of-work "punks" in Guildford, Surrey, have got together with local police to help the town's elderly for Christmas by chopping and distributing logs.

Police constable Daniel Glover was impressed by his team's efforts. "They are just ordinary people who express themselves by their appearance, and this example proves to others that they are capable of being very constructive", he said.

Park keeper saves child from sex attack 'menace'

A man who has spent 28 years in jail for offences against boys was sentenced to another six years' imprisonment at the Central Criminal Court yesterday.

The woman park keeper who rescued his latest victim was praised for her "courage and quick thinking". Carl Lundbeck, aged 48, whose longest period of freedom since he was first jailed has been nine months, was a menace to boys, Judge Nina Lowry said.

Lundbeck was convicted of child stealing, and attempted gross indecency after an attack on a boy aged nine in Acton, west London. The child, Lundbeck's 26th young victim, was snatched from the street as he went to a fish shop. Lundbeck dragged him across a park and into a lavatory.

But before any sex assault could take place, the boy's cries were heard by Mrs Anne Ling, the park warden, who ran to his rescue. Mrs Ling, aged 48, comforted the weeping boy when Lundbeck fled. She remembered everything she could about the assailant and was able to pick him out later at an identification parade.

Judge Lowry said it was "merciful" that Mrs Ling came on the scene and acted as she did.



Mrs Ling: praised in court.

Doris Archer actress dies, aged 77

By David Hewson Arts Correspondent

Gwen Berryman, the actress who created one of radio's best-loved characters, the Ambridge matriarch Doris Archer, has died, aged 77, in a Torquay hospital.

Miss Berryman played the role for 29 years until ill health forced her to retire in 1980. The programme attracted a huge audience when Doris Archer died in an armchair in October, 1980, much of it a tribute to an actress who for millions made the character a real person.

Mr Tony Shryane, who produced more than 7,000 episodes of *The Archers* from its start in 1951, said: "She made the character of Doris Archer a national figure, loved and respected by millions. She was a courageous woman who, though often in considerable pain from arthritis, never let it interfere with her work."

In 1981 Miss Berryman was made an MBE.

Guided buses recall age of the tram

By Michael Bailly Transport Editor

Birmingham hopes to launch a new age of the tram with a "guided bus" due to start in the spring.

Instead of having steel wheels on rails, the otherwise conventional double-deck bus will run along a concrete track. Vertical parapets on either side will steer the bus by means of small guidewheels extending from the front axle.

A half-mile experimental track is being constructed along a disused tramway on the central reservation of a dual carriageway road in an inner suburb, and if successful it will be extended elsewhere in the city.

The idea is to slice through urban congestion at far lower cost than a tram or light railway. The city's earlier tramway system, abolished in the 1950s, was one of the finest in the world.

At either end of the guideway, buses will simply drive on and off, continuing through the city in the normal way. A special dispensation is needed from the Department of Transport for the guideway's projecting three inches.

A similar system, developed by Daimler-Benz in Germany, is operating in Essen and is being installed in Adelaide, Australia. Birmingham chose to develop its own system with the help of Metro-Cammell Wayman and Guest, Keen, Nestlé, Ltd. Total initial cost is £500,000.

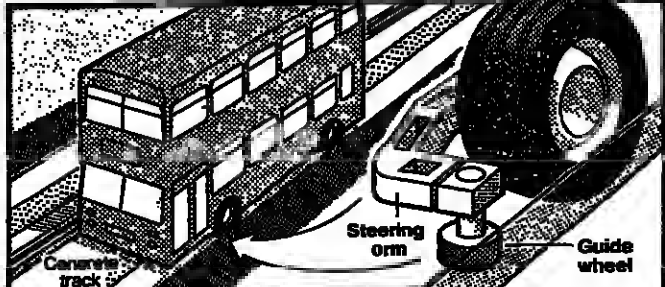
It has four advantages, according to Mr Bob Crawford, director of planning and engineering at the West Midlands Passenger Transport Executive.

It uses 25 per cent less road space than a conventional bus route, because the guideway confines the bus to a limited track. That will be important if new guideways are built on congested roads.

The reserved track will permit faster timings and improved punctuality. While on the track, buses will not be affected by congestion.

The raised guideways, about six inches high, will stop motorists wandering on to the track, as they do on a conventional bus-lane.

Buses can be used flexibly on or off guideways, unlike trams.



Monopoly study into franking machine firms

By Derek Harris Commercial Editor

Two companies dominating the postal franking machine market, Pitney Bowes, of which Mr Denis Thatcher, the Prime Minister's husband, is a director, and Roneo Alcatel, are to be investigated by the Monopolies and Mergers Commission following many complaints to the Office of Fair Trading.

The investigation will also include Hasler (Great Britain), a subsidiary of a Swiss company, but Pitney Bowes and Roneo Alcatel, which are both foreign-owned, together account for 95 per cent of franking machines in use in many companies to imprint postage values on envelopes to avoid the use of postage stamps.

Pitney Bowes is the British subsidiary of Pitney Bowes Incorporated in the United States and Roneo Alcatel is part of France's Generale d'Electricite.

Youth accused of bomb hoax

Andrew Brown, aged 19, a despatch rider, was rerouted to £500 bail until December 28 at Bow Street Magistrates' Court, London yesterday, charged with making a bomb hoax call. The court forbade him to go within two miles of the street from which he is said to have telephoned.

Mr Brown, of Stainer Close, Sholing, near Southampton, is accused of telling police there was a bomb in Blackfriars on Tuesday.

Parking meters' £133m takings

British parking meters have taken £133,470,000 from motorists since they were introduced 25 years ago, the Royal Automobile Club says.

According to a survey by the RAC, there were 52,720 meters in Britain at the end of March, 400 fewer than last year.

Operating costs have more than doubled since 1978.

Radioactive leak case referred to DPP

POLLUTION

The series of abnormal discharges of radioactive matter from the Sellafield plant of British Nuclear Fuels Ltd in Cumbria last month has been brought to the attention of the Director of Public Prosecutions with whom the Department of the Environment and the Health and Safety Executive are cooperating.

Announcing this in a Commons statement, Mr Patrick Jenkin, Secretary of State for the Environment, said the most important thing was to prevent the repetition of such an incident and both the Nuclear Installations Inspectorate and the DoE have notified BNFL of the further measures they wished the company to take.

Mr Jenkin added the people should continue to avoid the beach in the vicinity of the discharges for the time being.

He said: During the six days from November 11 to November 16 a series of abnormal discharges were made from the Sellafield plant of British Nuclear Fuels Ltd through the pipeline to the sea. The discharges followed the washing out of the reprocessing plant in the course of annual maintenance.

Following a management error in the operation of that plant, radioactive liquids including solvent and particulate matter of higher than normal activity were transferred to a sea tank. Attempts were made to transfer the more active material to another storage tank. This was not completely successful and a significant quantity of the radioactivity was discharged to the sea.

The Radiochemical Inspectorate of the department and the Nuclear Installations Inspectorate of the Health and Safety Executive have been carrying out detailed investigations into the cause of the incident. Neither the Secretary of State for Energy (Mr Peter Walker) nor the Secretary of State for the Environment (Mr Patrick Jenkin) have yet received final reports.

While it seems clear that there has been no breach of the authorised quarterly numerical limits on the discharge of radioactivity there may well have been breaches of other conditions namely those requiring exposures from discharges to be kept. It is also possible that there were some breaches of other conditions of the NII site licence.

For these reasons the matter has been brought to the attention of the Director of Public Prosecutions with whom my department and the Health and Safety Executive are cooperating.

The most important thing is to prevent any repetition of such an incident. Both NII and my department have notified BNFL of the further measures they wish the company to take. The measures so far taken by BNFL include a ban on the discharge of free solvent and an automatic cut-off system governing the discharge of liquid from the sea tanks. Other measures are in hand.

Extensive and continuing monitoring of the environment has confirmed that the risk to the public was, and remains, extremely small. The Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food (Mr Michael Jopling) is today answering a written question announcing the publication of a report on the

marine environmental and agricultural consequences of the discharge. This shows that there has not been any significant effect on fish, shellfish or other foods. There is therefore no reason why people should not eat local catches or farm produce.

Also published today is a report by the National Radiological Protection Board, prepared for my department, on the distribution and analysis of samples of seaweed and other flosses collected from the beach ten miles either side of the pipeline.

One conclusion of the report, confirmed by separate analysis carried out by HSE, is that the radioactivity in the samples was well below the level that would constitute any hazard to the general population in the area. The NRPB's main concern, however, is that anyone handling the more active samples taken from the beach could exceed the annual dose limit for the skin after only comparatively brief direct contact.

It remains true that any risk of contamination to the public is extremely small. People should only use the beach for recreation and should not handle objects washed up by the sea. Monitoring will continue and my department will keep the public fully informed on this subject.

This is an interim report which I have thought it right to make to the House before the Christmas recess. The Government intends that the reports both from the DoE's Radiochemical Inspectorate and from the Nuclear Installations Inspectorate should be published as soon as possible after they are received by Ministers, provided there is no risk of prejudicing any legal proceedings. When we have the final reports I will make a further statement.

Dr John Cunningsham, Chief Opposition spokesman on the environment, commented in recent days that he welcomed his decision to make what he rightly says can only be an interim statement. I agree with him that it is of the utmost importance that the final reports of the NII and the Radio Chemical Inspectorate

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are published for the benefit of the House and the country and, not least, for the benefit of my own constituents in West Cumbria.

Is he aware of the very real anger as well as concern which is felt by the community in West Cumbria and indeed people much further afield about this incident which they widely regard as something which should simply not have happened.

What has occurred calls into question the competence of the management at the plant. Does that not in addition mean that public acceptance of the operations of the nuclear industry has been unnecessarily damaged?

Why is it that this eventuality - the discharging of material to the sea - was not recognized when the Nuclear Installations Inspectorate carried out their exhaustive examination of the Magnox facilities and the plant in 1980 and when they reported to the Secretary of State in 1981?

Is the Secretary of State, in talking about procedures, aware of whether it is that the company which will be prosecuted of individuals?

Since it is now clear from published information that BNFL have systematically reduced their discharges to the marine environment over a period of years, they are well capable of operating satisfactorily within much lower discharge limits?

Would not that greater control of discharges bring pressure to bear on the management to prevent this kind of occurrence happening again?

Hitherto, the industry has worked on the principle of discharges being as low as reasonably achievable. Is it not now clear from the public reaction and concern that we should move as quickly as possible to a situation where discharges are as low as policy acceptable?

Does not that mean that discharges of plutonium, caesium and other actinides should be totally eliminated as soon as possible?

Mr Jenkin: We would of course entirely agree that it is an incident which should not have happened and the most important thing is to make sure it should never happen again.

I also agree it is of the utmost importance that the public, both locally and nationally, should be fully confident in the management of these nuclear plants and that this is of the highest importance for the continuance of the country's nuclear programme.

Regarding the competence of management, it would be better if I did not pronounce on that. We have not had the final report and the matters will be the subject of proceedings in the courts.

He asked whether it would be the companies or individuals who would be prosecuted. That must be a matter for the DPP.

He asked me about the 1980 Nuclear Inspectorate's report on the Magnox plant. It would be wiser to wait for the publication of the final report. On that I can offer him some reassurance. (Coppeland, Lab.) I would agree, I'm sure, that should avoid prejudice of legal proceedings and that should be an over-riding consideration, the latest legal advice I have had has shown that that need not necessarily



Warren: Increased danger from sea spray

prevent the early publication of the two reports.

On the question of lower discharge limits, from the first statement I made on the subject it is indeed our intention to work for substantially lower authorisations. I repeat now that if the circumstances seem appropriate we are certainly open to consider still further lower authorisations so this plant complies and has to comply with the discharge of radioactivity.

Mr Kenneth Warren (Hastings and Rye, C): Would he ask the agencies concerned to look in particular at the apparent magnification effect of the order of 10 to 20 times greater than current in the sea which results as radioactivity coming ashore from sea spray? Mr Jenkin: He will have seen a report in *The Guardian* commenting on research at Harwell which indicates that the sea spray in our department. We have not had the full results of that yet but if this is a serious anxiety we shall take such steps as are open to us.

Mr Dale Campbell-Savours (Wokingham, Lab.): Is the Director of Public Prosecutions does recommend prosecution it will be a just return for BNFL for having pursued a policy of trying to stop it being considered the fullest compensation for all those who have lost?

The population of West Cumberland will only be satisfied when the objective of zero discharge of radioactive materials is fully realised even at the expense of the full cost of Government.

We believe in West Cumberland if we are to retain this plant then Government and Parliament must ensure that adequate financial resources are made available to us so as to avoid all possible risks.

Mr Jenkin: The £20,000 fine on Great Pease is a matter between them and the courts. I remind him that the judge expressly said he intended to leave them with the ability to protest peacefully. It was a question of trying to stop them interfering with the pipeline. What was really wanted was that interference would cease.

Compensation is a matter which must await publication of the reports so we can see whether there is any case for that.

As for zero discharge, I would not add anything to what I have already said about authorization. The principle is as low as reasonably achievable. If properly enforced, and that is perhaps one of the approaches where a prosecution might lie, that produces an extremely low level of discharge indeed.

Effect of tour on Commonwealth

SPORT

The proposed English Rugby Union tour of South Africa would have damaging repercussions throughout the Commonwealth, Mr Neil Macfarlane, Minister for Sport, said during a question time exchange in the Commons. Anyone who underestimated the impact on Commonwealth sport seriously underestimated the current situation, he added.

Mr John Carlisle (Luton North, C) asked him what recent discussions had taken place with the President of the English Rugby Union regarding the proposed tour to South Africa.

Mr Macfarlane: My officials and I have had numerous discussions with representatives of the Rugby Football Union. The President is repeat now that if the circumstances seem appropriate we are certainly open to consider still further lower authorisations so this plant complies and has to comply with the discharge of radioactivity.

Mr Carlisle: While appreciating his obligation under the Glenagee agreement in dropping sporting contact with South Africa and his own avowed opposition to sporting contacts with the Commonwealth, would he confirm that at the end of the day it will be the President of the English Rugby Union and his colleagues to decide whether they tour South Africa or not?

Will he promise not to put undue pressure or coercion upon them? Mr Macfarlane: The Rugby Football Union will decide in the spring of next year whether this proposed tour should take place next year.

I am in no doubt that the tour would have damaging repercussions throughout the whole Commonwealth. Mr Carlisle is entitled to his

views, but he must be aware of the wider context of sport throughout the Commonwealth in all this. I would like to speculate about what vote may take place among the 50-odd delegates of the Rugby Football Union. People are free to travel and go anywhere in the world if they wish to participate but on this subject I will wish to talk to the President of the RFU next year to ensure that they understand fully that at the recent Commonwealth heads of government meeting in Delhi we re-affirmed once again this country's commitment to the Commonwealth declaration on apartheid in sport.

Mr Dennis Casavan (Falkirk West, Lab.) asked for the more verbal condemnation, what will he do about the proposed tour next year by the English rugby team and the current tour of Wales by the South African youth rugby team?

Mr Macfarlane: I hope he will try to maintain a little cool on this subject. I regret that the English rugby authorities have decided to proceed with this tour. I would urge them at this 11th hour to consider the wider implications for sport in the Commonwealth and Wales.

The Minister of State at the Welsh Office has urged cancellation of this tour in the strongest terms. The tour is contrary in the spirit of the Commonwealth declaration on apartheid in sport. I cannot prophesy what I will say to the President of the RFU next year.

Mr John Stokes (Halesowen and Stourbridge, C): In spite of the supposed susceptibility of the unacceptable rate increases in some parts of the country.

Mrs Edwina Curry (South Derbyshire, C) had caused laughter when she said the London borough of Lewisham had invested £100,000 of ratepayers' money in a commercial pantomime and then substituted for the name of the evil monster not that of Mr Ken Livingstone but Mr Norman Tebbit, Secretary of State for Trade and Industry.

Entirely in the spirit of Christmas (she said) would Mr Jenkin indicate which of the Opposition front-bench candidates my fellow Lewishamian, Mr Eric Heffer, he would like to nominate for the role of the good fairy?

Mr Jenkin: I would commend her talents as a dramatist but there are sadly no pantomime companies going on among some of the loony left councils, not least Lambeth and Lewisham.

The Bill I published yesterday (on rate capping) will be some sense to those local governments who are bringing local government itself into disrepute.

The Government's commitment to rate capping was reaffirmed by Mr Jenkin in a speech to the House of Commons yesterday. Under Secretary of State for the Environment, during other exchanges.

Mr Geoffrey Finesberg (Hamstead and Highgate, C) had asked: Would he accept that millions of people voted for this Government in order to bring in rate capping and they would regard it as a betrayal if he, or the Lords, try to repudiate it?

Mr Waldegrave: He need have no fear. The central manifesto commitment repeated by the Bill will be carried through to the end. I am sure that in 1984 we will be able to tighten up sufficiently to meet his demands.

Commonwealth, why does he try to penalize South Africa which after all is friendly to the West?

Mr Macfarlane: Perhaps he is not aware that just a few weeks ago the Prime Minister attended the Commonwealth heads of government meeting in Delhi. The Commonwealth declaration on apartheid in sport was upheld by all members present.

Mr John House (Foyle, SDLP): The most evil form of discrimination is that which relates to the colour of skin. While people may change their religion or creed the one thing we cannot do is change the colour of our skin. A regime based on

Mr David Clark (South Shields, Lab.), for the Opposition: He has our full support. The attitude of the English RFU is extremely selfish. If they persist in this stupid tour they put at risk the Commonwealth Games in Edinburgh in 1986.

While we would not approve the withdrawal of passports, would he use his best endeavours to persuade the Sports Council to tell the English RFU that if they persist in this tour, no money will be forthcoming from the Council to the RFU?

Mr Macfarlane: These are important topics. Above all I would urge all MPs to reflect upon the importance of Commonwealth sport seriously under-estimates the current situation.

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Repatriation of prisoners

HOUSE OF LORDS

The Government had no intention of putting itself in a position where it could be browbeaten into an exchange of prisoners. The Minister of State for the Home Office, assured Peers during the second reading debate on the Repatriation of Prisoners Bill in the House of Lords.

The Bill enables the transfer of prisoners with their consent between the United Kingdom and other countries under international agreements.

When it was raised that terrorists who committed crimes in Britain might be allowed to serve their sentences in their home countries, Lord Elton said the Government intended that the public interest should always be the

basis of decisions in cases where prisoners were not returned. Referring to the Harrods bombing, he commented in recent days that he welcomed his decision to make what he rightly says can only be an interim statement. I agree with him that it is of the utmost importance that the final reports of the NII and the Radio Chemical Inspectorate

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Extension of right to buy

HOUSING

The Government's "right to buy" provisions have been extended to tenants of county council owned homes no longer required for operational purposes under a new clause and associated amendments added by the Commons to the Housing and Building Control Bill. Hitherto this right has only applied to tenants of district councils.

Moving the new clause, which was carried by 262 votes to 151 in a Government majority, 111. Mr Ian Gowan, Minister for Housing, Construction, said during the Report stage that most county council tenants held their properties on tenancies let by counties for purposes closely related to one or other of their functions. For

example, police officers, wardens, caretakers, or dwellings let on a short-term basis prior to redevelopment.

County councils were not included in the 1980 Housing Act because of the supposed specialized nature of the letting where a right to buy would not be appropriate. However, the Government had become increasingly concerned about the position of county council tenants whose homes were no longer required by their landlords for operational purposes. There were a significant number of these.

The amendments would provide for the common treatment of county council district tenants. It would bring county council tenants within the security of tenure and right to buy provisions of the 1980 Act, subject to most important safeguards on the operational requirements of the county councils.

Mr Bowden has also had new information from the Department of Environment indicating that some pensioners who lose entitlement to housing benefit could also lose the higher rate of home insulation grants.

Since receipt of benefit is a qualification for these grants, some pensioners would only be eligible for 66 per cent, instead of 90 per cent grants. Many of the 270,000 pensioner households due to lose housing benefit entitlement under the proposed £230m cuts could also lose insulation grants.

Community radio affected by grant loss

An experiment to make broadcasting more accessible to people, including community groups, will be affected by the withdrawal next month of funding by the Government's Manpower Services Commission (MSC).

The MSC is to end its £37,000 grant, which paid for 10 community workers with Cardiff Broadcasting, the commercial radio station. The team ran workshops throughout south Wales, teaching broadcasting techniques and advising community groups.

Charities' income soars

Charities are celebrating a bumper Christmas this year, with income well above last year's record.

The British Heart Foundation yesterday reported a 17.5 per cent increase on last year.

"We are now able to expand our research facilities," the foundation said. "We are funding 15 professorships throughout the country, as well as funding and encouraging research into all diseases of the heart."

"Apart from research, part of our budget goes to educate doctors and the public on recent advances in research and

occasionally we give life-saving cardiac equipment to hospitals in need."

The Cancer Research Campaign said that takings were £3m up on last year and had passed £16m at the beginning of December.

But a spokesman asked people not to be complacent about donations when they heard of this year's success.

"We are funding over 600 projects and we need every penny we can lay our hands on. A lot of volunteers work very, very hard up and down the country and we need money desperately for our research."

Mr Leo Pliatzky, former Permanent Secretary at the Department of Trade, who ran the Treasury's spending divisions in the 1970s, criticized the Government yesterday for failing to produce figures to back up its promised "great debate" on funding the welfare state.

Speaking at a seminar in London organized by the Policy Studies Institute Sir Leo described the Treasury's long-term spending review as "a dog that has not barked in the night".

Call for regional bodies

LIBERAL BILL

Mr Paddy Ashdown (Yeovil, L) was given leave in the Commons under the 10-minute rule procedure to bring in a regional Assemblies (England) Bill which would establish regional assemblies in England.

He said he must be one of the few MPs who sought to get elected substantially to reduce the influence of Parliament and hand back to the people the power to control their own destiny.

Increasingly over the past four years there had been a shift from local government to central government, and the influence of the Prime Minister and the great Civil Service bureaucracy had grown at the expense of local democracy and genuine participative democracy.

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Spending 'debate' criticized

By Peter Hennessy

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Speaking at a seminar in London organized by the Policy Studies Institute Sir Leo described the Treasury's long-term spending review as "a dog that has not barked in the night".

Neither Parliament nor the public had been given any data by the Treasury on which they could make an informed judgment. The review had not been announced in Parliament; it had emerged after a non-attributable briefing to the Westminster political correspondents by the Prime Minister, in what would have been called a leak if somebody else had done it.

Sir Leo said there were three ways the review could be conducted, by a reviewed Think Tank, which he would not favour, as the Central Policy Review Staff had not worked; a 1980's version of the Beveridge Committee could be convened, which he did not favour either; Sir Leo preferred to strengthen the staff of the Treasury's expenditure divisions to provide the Cabinet with more briefing material on which choices could be made.

The Government's war on quangos claimed 82 victims last year, a cut of about 5 per cent.

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Italian loses extradition appeal on murder charges

An alleged international terrorist must return to Italy to stand trial for the murder of two Rome policemen, a High Court judge ruled in London yesterday.

Mr Justice Mann dismissed an appeal by Signor Luciano Petrone, aged 24, against a Bow Street magistrate's order for his extradition on the two murder charges and two counts of robbery.

Signor Petrone, claimed by the Italian Government to be a member of an extreme right-wing terrorist organization, was arrested last January at the home in Walton Street, Chelsea, south west London, of Miss Imogen Lucas-Box, his girlfriend.

After yesterday's hearing Miss Lucas-Box, aged 27,

pledged to stand by Signor Petrone. "I am very upset but I am going to talk to

Duke wins battle to keep spoils of Waterloo

Brussels (Reuters) - The Duke of Wellington emerged triumphant from a new battle of Waterloo yesterday. Senator Jean Humblet, a Walloon nationalist, withdrew a demand that a 100,000 francs (about £1,250) annuity paid since 1817 to the heirs of the original victor of Waterloo should be struck from next year's Belgian budget.

Royal plea for rare monkey

Geneva - The Duke of Edinburgh, as president of the World Wildlife Fund International, has appealed for the return to their natural habitat in Brazil of 24 golden-headed lion tamarins, one of the world's rarest monkeys. The total population is estimated at fewer than 100.

Fined for ghost in plumbing

Regensburg (AP) - A West German dentist and his wife were fined DM12,400 (about \$3,200) for staging a poltergeist hoax. For several months an alleged ghost named "Chopper" frustrated patients in remarks appearing from plumbing fixtures in the dentist's office. The court ruled he was seeking publicity.

Desert attack

Algiers (AFP) - The Moroccan Army has launched a big offensive in the Western Sahara, according to their Polisario Front opponents. More than 25,000 men, supported by armoured cars and aircraft were involved, a statement said.

Gang held

Catanzaro (AP) - Police arrested 51 people in a crackdown on organized criminal groups in the southern Calabria region. The group was alleged to be responsible for 31 murders, four kidnappings and other criminal activities.

Bus rescue

Vaduz (AP) - Lichtenstein has introduced cheaper bus fares to make public transport more attractive to those who use the 13,498 cars in the principality. The aim is to reduce the damage to forests caused by pollution.

High notes

Perth (Reuters) - An English entertainer, Peter Maxwell, is claiming a world altitude record for piano playing in a hot-air balloon after going through a medley of old favourites at a height of 5,926 ft.

10 women shot

Ankara (AP) - A farmer in Alibeyli village, east of Ankara, yesterday shot and killed his wife, three daughters and a woman relative and wounded five women neighbours. He then fled.

Volcano erupts

Tokyo (AP) - Kusatsu-Shirane (7,095ft), 50 miles north-west of Tokyo, erupted yesterday for the third time this year. There were no immediate reports of casualties.

Siege broken

Khartoum, (AP) - The Sudanese Government claims its army has broken a rebel siege of the southern town of Nasir, killing 480 rebels. The attack on the town began last month.

Correction

Protesters in Damascus were barred from routes to the American and French embassies, not to the Israeli embassy as reported on December 14. There is no Israeli embassy in the Syrian capital.

President's first press conference since Beirut massacre

Reagan says Marines will stay

From Nicholas Ashford Washington

The nationally televised press conference which President Reagan held at the White House on Tuesday night has underscored the growing concern both within the Administration and among the public about America's role in Lebanon. It was Mr Reagan's first formal press conference since the bombing of the US Marine headquarters in Beirut on October 23 which killed 241 servicemen. Almost two-thirds of the half-hour press conference was devoted to this tragedy.

When and under what circumstances would the 1,800 marines be withdrawn from Beirut reporters asked the President. What exactly was their role now that there had been several direct exchanges of fire between US and Muslim forces? Would military heads roll because of the lax security at the Marine headquarters at the time of the blast?

Mr Reagan, who appeared festively cheerful but whose stumbling replies betrayed a certain discomfort at having to weave his way through a minefield of politically dangerous questions, only partly succeeded in allaying these concerns.

He reaffirmed his determination to keep the Marines in Lebanon because the region was too important to the security of the West to just turn away. The Middle East was a tinder-box, he said, "one place that could start a war that nobody wants".



Mr Reagan: Cheerful mood, stumbling replies.



Sir Geoffrey: To make a long overdue visit.



Signor Spadolini: Careful choice of words.

On three separate occasions he said that the presence of the four-nation peacekeeping force in Beirut had allowed progress to be made both in the Lebanese national reconciliation talks and in building-up the strength of the Lebanese Army.

However, despite his contention that domestic American politics would not have any impact on his policy towards Lebanon, he failed to dispel the widely held view that the Marines would be withdrawn well before next year's presidential elections.

Challenged to explain a recent remark by him that the Marines could be pulled back if there was a total collapse of order in Lebanon, he admitted that he had used "a bad choice of words". He had simply been referring to a hypothetical situation.

However, the President said that perhaps there were a complete change of course to

the place where we were no longer asked to be there, that would be a reason for bringing them out.

Mr Reagan attempted to use the conference to explain why it was necessary for the Marines to be in Lebanon. Although his explanation was somewhat muddled and at times inaccurate, he did manage to get across the message that their mission was to help bring stability to Lebanon, at least President Gamal el-Bardissi to bring about the withdrawal of all foreign forces.

The President parried questions about a highly critical report by a House armed services sub-committee into the Beirut bombing which stated that "very serious errors of judgment" by senior officers on the ground and up through the chain of command, had left the Marines vulnerable to attack.

He did, however, speak in support of General Paul Kelley, the Marine Corps Commandant, who was accused in the

congressional report of intentionally putting forward misleading evidence to the sub-committee.

Mr Reagan defended the recent US-Israeli agreement on strategic cooperation saying that it was simply a reaffirmation of a long-standing relationship which should not alarm the Arab world.

This assurance has been accepted by the leading moderate Arab country, Egypt, whose Foreign Minister yesterday delivered a message to Mr Reagan from President Mubarak.

● LONDON: Sir Geoffrey Howe will make his first visit to the Middle East since becoming Foreign Secretary earlier this year. Egypt and Saudi Arabia will be the main stops on his itinerary, (Henry Stanhope writes).

News of the trip leaked into the Cairo press yesterday taking the Foreign Office by surprise

with final details still to be concluded.

Mr Richard Luce, Minister of State with special responsibility for the Middle East, has made two tours of the region since the British election last June which included Syria, Lebanon and the Gulf.

A visit by Sir Geoffrey himself has been long overdue. But other issues, particularly the EEC budget, have had to take precedence.

Syria and Lebanon are the most surprising omissions from the tour, particularly in view of current fears over the safety of the British contingent in the Beirut multinational peacekeeping force.

As it is, Sir Geoffrey will be going to the two leading moderate Arab states, leaving Mr Donald Rumsfeld, the US special envoy in the region, to represent the Western interest to the "frontline" governments.

● ROME: A date is awaited for the withdrawal of a part of the Italian contingent in Lebanon after the Government's decision for a gradual reduction was announced on Tuesday (Peter Nichols writes).

Senator Giovanni Spadolini, the Minister of Defence, made his statement in reply to parliamentary questions on the Lebanon crisis. He was careful to ascribe the decision to a situation now requiring fewer troops on the ground than had been the case earlier.

The first phase had now passed and this, combined with good military planning, meant a partial withdrawal was feasible.

Christmas in Bethlehem

A shortage of good will to men

Surrounded by an overwhelming majority of Jews and Muslims, Christmas for Christians in the Holy Land - the place where it is all begun in a Bethlehem manger - has taken on a beleaguered air, redeemed more by the authenticity of the locations rather than any inspirational quality they may still possess.

Bethlehem, sometimes referred to grandiloquently as the Sheffield of Palestine because of its preponderance of small workshops, is now warring its seventeenth successive Christmas under Israeli military occupation. As choirs from such unlikely spots as San Antonio and the Rand Afrikaans University burst into song during the televised celebrations, several hundred heavily armed Israeli soldiers will be on duty.

This year there will be an added sense of urgency as a new right-wing Jewish terrorist group, calling itself "Terror against Terror" (words which form the Hebrew acronym TNT), has recently launched a sinister campaign of booby-trapped grenade attacks against religious targets. Although Christian pilgrims have complained bitterly in the past about the distinctly unseasonal feel brought about by squads of Jewish soldiers swinging their Uz sub-machine guns, they may find their presence a distinct comfort in the circumstances.

Already this year Bethlehem's Arab University has been temporarily closed by military edict after a fierce anti-Israeli riot, while the town's main Palestinian refugee camp has been the scene of repeated, ugly stoning attacks against Jewish vehicles. Many of its inhabitants now fear that the Government is working secretly to shift it from its present site straddling the main road leading to the largest Jewish settlement of Kiryat Arba.

In case such grim matters should be conveniently overlooked in the spirit of the festive season, Mr Elias Freij, the town's portly and astute Arab Mayor, is on hand to provide the stream of journalists with a Christmas message subtly laced with the complexities of West Bank politics.

When I visited his ornate town hall, he was standing on the balcony telling ABC television about the urgent need for Jordanian-Israeli peace talks, while correspondents from Newsweek and US News and World Report hovered in a room near by. "Because of the frightening growth of Jewish settlements, the time for talking about peace is already past five

minutes to midnight", he said. "Palestinians in the West Bank are aware that very soon they will have nothing left to talk about".

Back in Israel proper, the second most favourite Christmas site of Nazareth has also been experiencing problems which speak little of peace on Earth or good will to men. On Monday Mr Moshe Arens, Israel's Defence Minister, told a parliamentary committee of his shock at recent statements by Jewish residents of the exclusive new suburb of Upper Nazareth denying the right of Israeli Arabs from the original section of the town to live among them.

The campaign to keep the area exclusively Jewish is headed by a local association whose aim, in the emotive words of one Israeli journalist, is to maintain their area of the biblical town Arab-free.

In an effort to counter any criticism from Christian institutions, the Jewish National Fund every year performs a service not encountered in most Christian countries by handing out free more than 3,000 Christmas trees to diplomats, journalists, churchmen and the host of United Nations peacekeeping bodies based in the area.

Tomorrow: Christmas in America

Although the gifts are in fact well-appreciated and the cause of ribald comment as they are transported through the streets of Tel Aviv and Jerusalem, where for most residents December 25 will be just another working day.

Other traditional customs abound, although most of the do-it-yourself basis that is the best guarantee here of a satisfactory result. Due to the rash purchase three years ago of a remaindered, Taiwanese-made plastic Santa Claus suit ("ideal for office party fun"), these for me now include a regular appearance before a large gathering of young children anxious to know why (a) Father Christmas has appeared from a flat sunroof rather than down the non-existent chimney and (b) whether he feels as hot as he looks, sporting a thick, ersatz cotton beard in temperatures of 70 degrees Fahrenheit.

But all-in-all, the abounding Christmas mood in the cities that the carols were written about is one of austerity combined with apprehension about the immediate future, especially the prospect of a new Middle East war.

Christopher Walker

Ex-guerrilla arrested on return to Argentina

From Our Correspondent Buenos Aires

Señor Ricardo Obregón Cano, a former leader of the Peronist guerrilla group, the Montoneros, has been arrested after returning to Argentina from exile to announce the dissolution of the organization.

Señor Obregón Cano, who was Governor of Córdoba province during the Peronist Government in 1973, said the Montoneros would in future pursue their left-wing ideology through a Peronist-associated political party.

He was arrested upon arrival from Brazil on Tuesday, after eight years in exile, on charges including illicit association and verbal incitement to violence. He was accompanied by Señor Oscar Bidegain, a former Montonero leader and Peronist governor of Buenos Aires province who was not arrested.

President Alfonsín issued a decree last week calling for the trial of seven suspected terrorist leaders, including Señor Obregón Cano, for their part in the bloodshed of the past decade. It is not known if the charges against Señor Obregón Cano stem from the presidential order or previous litigation.

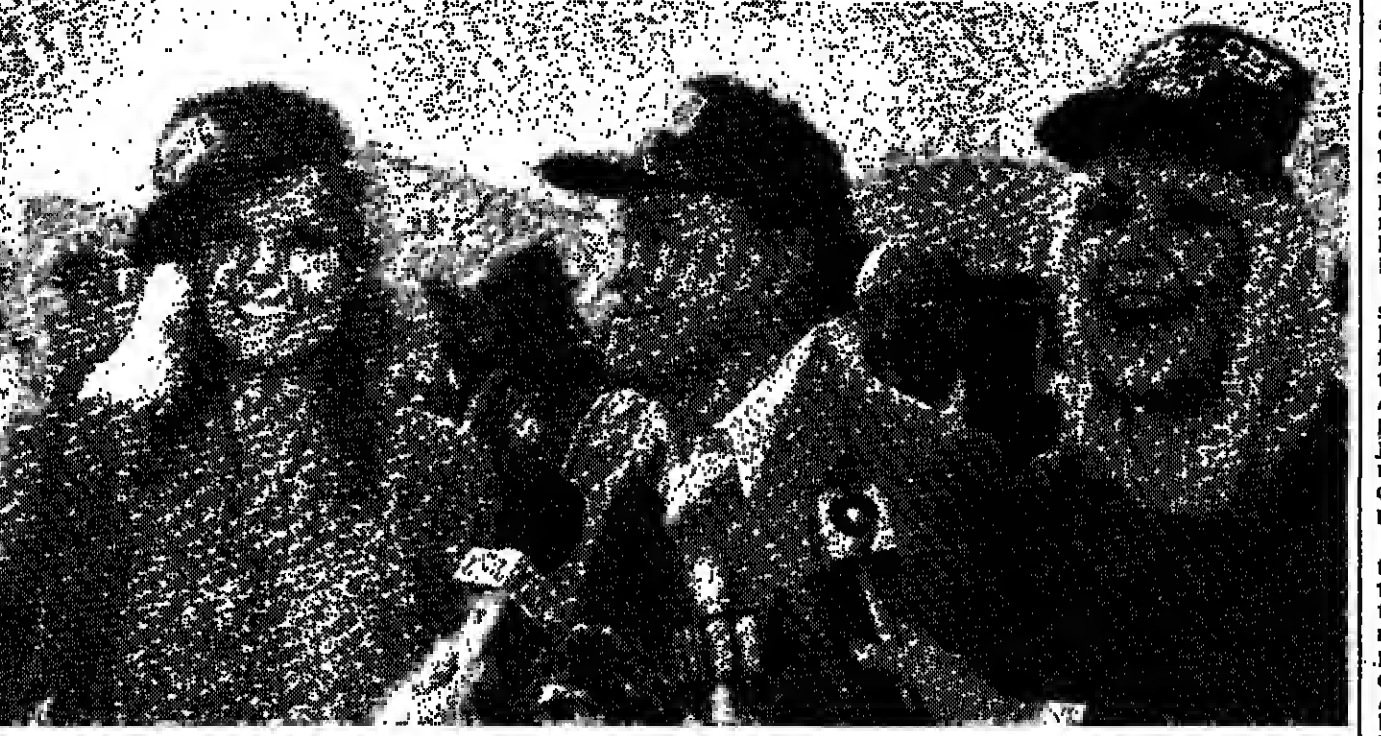
The decision is believed to have been an attempt to offset the political repercussions of a simultaneous decree ordering nine former military to be court-martialed.

The Montoneros group was originally formed by right-wing nationalists in 1969. The Montoneros burst on to the Argentine political scene in 1970, when they kidnapped and murdered General Pedro Aramburu, one of the leaders of the military regime which had overthrown President Juan Perón in 1955.

During the early 1970s the group adopted a left-wing ideology and recruited mainly young, middle-class Argentines. With the return of General Perón as President of Argentina in 1973, the Montoneros entered into bloody conflict with armed right-wing sectors of the Peronist movement who had links with some military and police officers.

The Montoneros' subsequent part in killing hundreds of military and police personnel was used as a justification by the military for the 1976 coup against the constitutional Government of General Perón's widow, Señora Isabel Perón.

The latest military officer to be charged with human rights violations during the seven years of military rule is former President Reynaldo Bignone, less than two weeks after he formally handed over the Government to civilians.



Bouncing back: Bob Hope, flanked by actresses Cathy Lee Crosby (left) and Ann Jillian, before leaving California for the Middle East, where he will entertain American servicemen. The comedian has been heavily criticized recently over the collapse of the Bob Hope British Classic golf tournament.

Fear of nuclear war

'Mad' superpowers denounced

From Zoriana Pysariwsky, New York

An impassioned plea for the United States and the Soviet Union to draw back from nuclear confrontation and return to the negotiating table was made by Señor Jorge Illueca of Panama, the president of the United Nations General Assembly, as he closed his 38th session. He told the two sides to end their "madness".

He also renewed an appeal to Presidents Reagan and Andropov to join other members at a summit meeting of the Security Council and reverse the arms race, which he said had gathered an irrational momentum of its own, going beyond the control and will of either side. "I plead with you, stop, and stop now," he said.

Mrs Jeanne Kirkpatrick, the US representative, took a more optimistic view. She had particular kind words for the Anglo-American alliance, emphasizing that, despite divergences on some votes, including the Falklands and Grenada, relations between the two were "just excellent".

● OTTAWA: Opponents of cruise missile testing in Canada

are going to have their day before the country's highest court (John Best writes). The Supreme Court has granted Operation Dismantle, a coalition of anti-nuclear groups, leave to appeal against an earlier decision by the Federal Court which upheld the Government's right to authorize the testing.

Unless stopped by the courts, the US Air Force will begin testing cruise in north-west Canada late this winter. Operation Dismantle says the tests will contribute to the arms race and increase the risk.

● BONN: Mr Peter Varkonyi, the Hungarian Foreign Minister, told Herr Hans-Dietrich Genscher, his opposite number here, that Hungary regarded the Stockholm disarmament conference as very important, and he gave a clear hint that he would attend the opening on January 17 (Michael Binyon writes).

During talks which dealt largely with the security situation in Europe after the breakdown of arms negotiations, Mr Varkonyi said his country wanted to see a continuation of détente and good relations with West Germany.

● GENEVA: The controversy on deployment of cruise and Pershing 2 is marked by "lack of rational argument and too much emotion", Dr Joseph Luns, the Secretary-General of NATO, said yesterday. He was answering questions at the Geneva Diplomatic Club (Alan McGregor writes).

Poles will not see 'Day After' film

From Roger Boyes, Warsaw

After weeks of backroom political wheeling and dealing the Polish authorities have decided against showing The Day After, the controversial American television film about nuclear war.

For some time it seemed as if the Government would confound Western critics of the film by giving it prime time treatment on Polish television, thus demonstrating that Warsaw Pact countries were also capable of informing their public about the hazards of atomic war.

The American network had insisted that the film should be shown with the full text, without censorship. The only people to see the film on Tuesday were a group of invited Soviet journalists. Rumours persist that Moscow, too, is at least considering buying the film.

Meanwhile, for the first time, the commander of Poland's air defence forces, General Longin Lozowicki, has revealed what "counter-measures" Poland is planning to the stationing of new cruise and Pershing missiles in Western Europe. Air defence equipment is being

prepared for the "complex situation". "Advanced electronic equipment and in particular radio-location stations and automated systems for transmitting radar information - all this ensures conditions for the successful execution of the tasks of the missile forces and air defence interception," he said in an interview with PAP news agency.

The point was, he said, to speed up the Polish response to a Western attack and this required both coordination with neighbouring Warsaw Pact countries and efficient use of automated defence systems.

● MOSCOW: Broadcasting sources said yesterday that talks between ABC and the Soviet authorities over The Day After had been going on for several weeks without success. There was now little chance that the film would be shown in Russia (Richard Owen writes).

The film has been seen widely in the higher echelons of the Soviet political and military elite, sources said, but the Kremlin was against allowing ordinary Russians to see it.

West Berlin gets back on the track

From Michael Binyon, Bonn

For the first time since the Second World War, West Berlin is about to gain control of the surface railway in the divided city. After two months of tough negotiations, the city authorities are on the point of signing an agreement with East Berlin to take over the derelict and bankrupt S-Bahn, administered until now by the East Germans.

Under the agreement West Berlin will pay a yearly rent of DM9.5m (about £2.43m) to the Reichsbahn - the pre-war name for the railway system that is now run under the same name by the communist authorities - and will administer the 90 miles of line in West Berlin territory as a separate unit.

Permission for the new arrangement has to be obtained first from the three Western

allies, but they have already indicated agreement.

The urban railway, once one of the most advanced and extensive in West Europe, is in a sorry state. With broken-down stations, old coaches and dangerously decayed bridges and track, traffic in the Western sector has all but come to a standstill, and only three lines are functioning.

After the war the allies, administering Berlin as a single unit, gave control of its railways to the Eastern sector. After the building of the Wall in 1961, West Berliners boycotted the system. Trains continued running, though no East Berliners were allowed to travel beyond the border into West Berlin. No modernization or repairs were carried out by the communist authorities, however, and the S-Bahn lost a lot of money.

The West Berlin Senate does not intend to restore the whole of the derelict network, which is no longer necessary as the underground system, built up and administered by the West Berlin authorities, is already adequate.

Of the 47 miles of track still in use, only about 25 miles will eventually be used for passenger traffic, according to the Senate's plans, and repairs to these lines are to start next year.

The total cost is enormous: DM253m of it will be made available to Berlin by the Bonn Government. The East Germans are estimated to make a loss of about DM100m a year on the S-Bahn at present. In 1980 they tried to dismiss scores of West Berlin employees of the system, which provoked a strike that the communist authorities were able to break.

May death confirmed by judge

From Our Own Correspondent Rome

Dr Alessandro Jacobone, the judge investigating the Jeanette May case, gives no credence to allegations that she and her companion, Gabriella Guerin, could still be alive and in Latin America.

Reports that they might not have died will appear this weekend in a Milan publication. Jeanette May and her friend vanished from the town of Sarnano in November, 1980. Two bodies were found in January, 1982, at Podalis, near Macerata.

"The one certainty we have is that the death of the two women took place at Podalis and the remains found there were those of the missing women," Dr Jacobone said.

Jeanette May's identification was certain and the body was allowed to be cremated, he said. In Gabriella Guerin's case, the present tests were aimed at removing any possible doubt.

The judge said there was no truth that investigators had been sent to track the women down in Latin America. A new inquiry was opened a year ago into the deaths. The judge refuses to comment on what progress he has made.

Cash for Nazi conscripts

Mainz (AP) - Thousands of Frenchmen forced to serve in the German Army during the Second World War are to be compensated after France's decision to return German-owned land seized in 1944, officials said here yesterday.

Some 60,000 Frenchmen who were impressed into the Wehrmacht from the provinces of Alsace and Lorraine, or their relatives, will receive payments from a DM250m (£62m) fund.

The money, provided in the 1984 budget passed this month by the West German Parliament, will be transferred to the "Endowment for German-French Understanding" in Strasbourg in three stages. The foundation will decide how to distribute the money to the surviving soldiers and relatives of others forced into German uniform, the officials said.

We could run out of money before you run out of excuses.

Before you put this newspaper down, get a pen, your cheque book (or a postal order) and send a donation to the NSPCC.

It doesn't matter how much you send; the money will be used to give the chance of a normal childhood to children who've never had one.

Dr A. Gilmour, NSPCC, 30324
By Saltram Hill, London EC1N 8RS

"I'll really try to send money to the NSPCC this year."

Sweden defies US pressure to return seized computers

From Christopher Masey
Stockholm

Sweden yesterday nervously defied the request of Mr Caspar Weinberger, the US Defence Secretary, that it hand over more than 40 tonnes of American high technology impounded on its way to the Soviet Union.

After a report yesterday by the War Material Inspection Board, which stated that computer equipment in various containers seized by customs men here over the past month could have a military use, the Swedish Government announced last night that the equipment would be kept in Sweden indefinitely.

The move is understood to have been prompted by annoyance among Mr Olof Palme's Cabinet at the intense pressure put on Sweden to return the equipment to the United States. This was brought into the open at a press conference in Washington on Monday, when both Mr Weinberger and Mr Donald Regan, the Treasury Secretary, said Sweden should send back the computers to the United States, their country of origin.

On the same day the Soviet press agency Novosti issued a



Mr Palme: A middle way out of the dilemma.

statement in Stockholm asking contemptuously: "How is it that some people give way so easily to American attempts to dictate policy to an independent nation? Must the Swedes really in all business deals be supervised by instructions from the USA's Defence Department?" Under pressure from both sides, Mr Palme yesterday opted for a middle way out of the dilemma, choosing to assert Swedish neutrality while at the same time bowing to US demands that the high technology should not reach the Soviet bloc.

One of the options being considered by the Swedish Government is that the equipment be destroyed. However, the move has been postponed because of feared American economic retaliation.

This could include a ban on the export to Sweden of US high technology needed for Sweden's new missile project, a project which could depend on the survival of the country's independent aerospace industry. It could also mean a ban on the projected sale to Sweden of Swedish missiles.

The computer equipment, which US officials claim is capable of guiding missiles, was sent to Sweden in various consignments, the main one having been landed at Helsingborg last month from the Swedish cargo ship Elgaren.

US customs men had previously obtained a court order for the removal of three containers of equipment from the ship just seven minutes before it was due to leave the West German port of Hamburg. Four more containers stayed on board the Elgaren and were at Helsingborg, where they were put under armed guard until their contents could be examined by the War Material

Inspection Board, which has to approve all arms exports from Sweden.

Further finds of related equipment were made at Malmo and Stockholm, and another case of computer equipment was impounded by the Finnish authorities at Helsinki airport, indicating the extent of the high-technology smuggling operation.

According to Swedish customs, the man behind the operation is Herr Richard Müller, a West German businessman. In 1981 Herr Müller was blacklisted by the US authorities and recently in Lubeck he was charged in his absence with illegal export of high technology.

● DENVER: Customs agents closed in on companies in Colorado and West Germany yesterday, arresting two people and seizing "critical" technology alleged by being sold illegally to the Soviet Union (AP reports).

Among the items that the International Consulting Group of Englewood, Colorado, is accused of selling illegally to the Russians are devices used to detect and measure nuclear explosions and another used to etch microcomputer chips.

EEC helps blind to feel their way

From Ian Murray
Brussels

The EEC took time off from its wrangling yesterday to promote a scheme which shows that the Community can do something important successfully. It is a scheme to help the 500,000 blind or nearly blind people living in the Community to find their way around.

Essentially it is a system of creating town maps which can be read with dulled fingers. Pressed into heavy-duty plastic, these maps allow blind people to find their way round a strange city without the need of a guide or for asking the way in a foreign language.

The idea is more than 20 years old, but it has been slow to make progress because of the great difficulty in agreeing on standard symbols all blind people could understand. It was to overcome this problem that the help of the European Commission was sought.

The result was a symposium in Brussels six weeks ago, which resulted in that rare EEC commodity - total agreement. The symposium's report notes modestly: "Never before in this context had such complete harmonization of divergent viewpoints been achieved within the space of three days."

An amalgam of different systems has been adopted by the EEC, though many of the basic signs which have been worked out in a trial project in Nottingham have been accepted now as the European norm. Dr Graham James, director of mobility aids in Nottingham, was able to point out many of the basic difficulties - such as how to make sure the map was held the correct way up.

Yugoslav has £4bn art hoard

Zagreb (AFP) - Yugoslavs have just learnt to their surprise that in a socialist state, an individual possesses a private art collection valued up to £4,140m, the equivalent of one third of the country's entire foreign debt.

Mr Ante Topic-Mimara, aged 86, was for many years a close friend of Marshal Tito. His collection of 3,864 items includes a staggering number of paintings attributed to such masters as Goya, Holbein, El Greco, Manet, Michelangelo, Raphael, Rembrandt, Renoir, Rubens, Tintoretto and Titian.

Many envious art critics, faced with such treasures, claim that most of them are fakes. But other art lovers have another theory.

They point to the fact that in 1948 Mr Topic-Mimara was put in charge by Tito of finding and returning art treasures stolen by the Nazis during the wartime occupation of the country. He discovered many of them stored by the Allies.

Several art critics here have wondered whether Mr Topic-Mimara's collection contains items seized from the Yugoslav royal family and rich Yugoslav businessmen which have vanished without trace.

His answer to all his critics is a defiant: "I'm not a thief, and the way that I have collected my art treasures is my own private affair."

The Yugoslav authorities appear not to be worried about the origins of the Topic-Mimara collection. They have just spent 500 million dinars (about £2.75m) - in a country where there is not much loose cash about - on refurbishing a seventeenth-century monastery to house the collection temporarily.

Managua believes it has beaten Reagan

From Alan Fontaine
Managua

Nicaragua believes it has succeeded in spurning President Reagan's diplomatic strategy of using the threat of military intervention and economic sanctions to deliver a severe blow to the US-backed anti-Sandinista contras.

Commander Jaime Wheelock, a member of the ruling junta, said 2,000 contras had infiltrated the northern provinces of the country over the past few weeks and expect a battle of great importance.

Reactions to the news in neighbouring Honduras have long been forecasting a Christian-mas offensive, apparently against the key economic objective of the Nicaraguan coffee harvest. The contras were understood to have been told by Washington that a dramatic success was needed if CIA financial backing was to continue.

Sources close to the junta said 2,000 insurgents was a larger and more concentrated force than the contras had previously marshalled.

Señor Roberto Sánchez, the Nicaraguan Army's spokesman, told international volunteers, who have arrived in their hundreds to help to harvest the coffee: "The danger is everywhere. The zone of combat is virtually the entire northern border."

Amid reports of large convoys of government troops and tanks leaving the capital by night on the northern highway, Commander Wheelock said: "The immediate task is to deliver a strategic blow to the counter-revolution. We have launched a big offensive to



Missiles and mistletoe: Father Christmas visiting a Rapiers anti-aircraft unit in the Falklands with a sack of gifts for the crew (from left) Gunners Kelvin Kelly, Gareth Welsh, Andrew Griffin and Sergeant Philip Morris.

Chile 'could go way of Nicaragua'

From Florencia Varas
Santiago

The blackout which left much of Chile without electricity for several hours last week - though responsible have yet to be found - has raised fears here that the country may be in danger of a leftist upheaval similar to that in Nicaragua. The fears are based on the scope of terrorist acts in the past few months and the Government's rigid determination not to quicken the pace of a return to democracy.

"In Chile, the deadline for a democratic process along the lines of Argentina is quickly closing upon us, and it is this which those in power do not wish to understand," Señor Ricardo Lagos, president of the influential Democratic Alliance, told The Times in an interview.

"If a democratic 'opening' doesn't come quickly in the country, the social tension resulting from 30 per cent unemployment is going to get worse, and every day, make a more explosive situation which could turn into a process similar to what happened in Nicaragua."

According to the 45-year-old economist, former employee of the United Nations and leader of the largest opposition group in the country (the Alliance groups sectors from the right, Social Democracy, Christian Democrats and Socialists), President Pinochet has already laid all his cards.

Señor Lagos said the strategy of the Democratic Alliance in coming months will be to "achieve a complete mobilization of the country to culminate a national strike. If this is not done, the government will be forced to sit at the table and talk seriously with the opposition."

"We shall sit down to negotiate with the armed forces only when they agree to accept our (the Alliance's) three fundamental principles - Pinochet's resignation, the installation of an 18-month provisional government, and freely held elections" for a constituent assembly. Referring to the possibility of armed revolution, Señor Lagos said: "It isn't appropriate for the Chilean reality. Fidel Castro is right when he says that guerrillas are not for South America. Chile, because of its homogeneous population and its high level of education, is different from other Latin American nations where the guerrilla sectors have a 'raison d'être'."

However, he said, "the guerrilla sectors have appeared with a large photograph of a peaceful scene in Jalalabad purporting to show that life is normal. On past experience, this is a sure sign that guerrilla resistance has intensified."

In short, the sources say, the fourth year of the occupation has reinforced earlier Western assessments of a long-standing military stalemate, with the Russians unable to crush resistance and the mujahidin unable to force a withdrawal.

Ray of sunshine for disillusioned Spain

From Richard Wigg, Madrid

Señor Felipe González, the Spanish Prime Minister, arrived back here yesterday from a lightning trip to Paris, where he discussed the problem of EEC and Basque terrorism with President Mitterrand.

He believes the Basque problem is the most serious of Spain's domestic problems, and that it is a great caution, emphasizing that he did not want to see the hope of a settlement of the Basque problem after some time, but that he would like to see it resolved as soon as possible.

Mr González said that he had discussed the Basque problem with the French President, and that he had agreed to meet the French Prime Minister, Mr Raymond Barre, in Paris on Monday.

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Britain's body in Seme

Paris (AP) - The British mission in Seme, Mozambique, reported missing yesterday.

Mr Graham, who was reported missing from a hotel on November 11, was identified by a wrist-watch identified as owned by Mr Graham and found in the clothes.

Police were trying to find whether Mr Graham's body was linked to that of Neil Campbell, an ICI economist expert who was found drowned near a French Navy shipyard in Brest, in Brittany, on December 2. He had also disappeared from his Paris hotel a few days earlier.

US still gives most to Harare despite aid cut

From Our Correspondent Harare

The United States will probably continue to be Zimbabwe's biggest aid contributor through 1984, despite the recent cut, diplomatic sources said. State Department officials announced on Tuesday that the aid programme would be slashed by about \$40m (£20m). They denied the move was prompted by political squabbles over Zimbabwe, though the US has been giving the country several months' warning to have been cut.

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Pretoria tries to charm its enemies

From Michael Egan
Johannesburg

The meeting between Pik Botha, the South African Foreign Minister, and senior Mozambique ministers in a royal guest house in Swaziland on Tuesday has strengthened the view that Pretoria's uneven approach to coexistence with its black-ruled neighbours - entering a conciliatory phase.

The meeting came only a week after South Africa's offer to begin from January 31 disengaging those of its forces which operate from time to time in southern Angola, and to take a similar role in southern Mozambique.

The meeting was held at the United Nations, but the South African Government has been criticised for its approach to coexistence with its black-ruled neighbours.

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Italy shows mercy to ill Bulgarian

From Peter Nichols
Rome

Investigators into the alleged Bulgarian connexion with the May 1982 attempt here on the Pope's life have agreed to allow Mr Sergei Ivanov Antonov to leave prison while, remaining under house arrest, on the ground of ill-health.

Mr Antonov was arrested in November, 1982, and has been in Rome's Rebibbia Prison without trial while the investigation proceeded.

At the time of his arrest he worked in the Rome office of the Bulgarian airline. He has been examined by Italian and Bulgarian doctors, on several occasions. An examination at the weekend showed him to have lost 22lb and be suffering from psychic disturbances as well as gastric problems. For some time he has shown signs of deep depression.

The Bulgarian Embassy has undertaken to see that Mr Antonov will not try to leave the country.

He was arrested after Mehmet Ali Agca, the Turkish terrorist who shot and nearly killed the Pope, had named his as one of his fellow-conspirators.



The Bulgarian connexion: Mr Antonov at the time of his arrest in November last year.

No decision has yet been taken on whether Mr Antonov should be charged formally and sent for trial.

His release means he will not be at Rebibbia on December 27, when the Pope visits the prison. The Pope intends to have a private talk with Ali Agca during the visit.

On Tuesday the Pope received a group of prison chaplains and talked to them over lunch, about the Italian prison system, as preparation for his Rebibbia visit. He is understood to have expressed amazement at the length of time the prisoners could be held while awaiting trial.

He apparently wanted to know details about the way Ali Agca, who is serving a life sentence, was being treated in his special isolation cell.

Turkey arrests two foreigners for car bombing

From Our Correspondent Ankara

A Syrian and an Afghan have been arrested in connection with the explosion of a hooby-tracked car here yesterday.

Turgut Ozal, the Prime Minister, confirmed.

It was not clear, however, whether the unidentified suspects were also charged with responsibility for rigging another car with explosives in Izmir last Monday.

The Ankara blast exploded in the residential district of Bahçeşehir, where several senior politicians live.

At about the same time as the Ankara blast, two gunmen threw a bomb near the Iraqi Consulate in the Besiktas district of Istanbul, killing four people.

The bombings came after an announcement on Tuesday night by the market's authorities, of the discovery of a bomb in a car parked in the American Officers Club, and the Turkish Cultural Centre in the Beyoğlu district.

In Gulbahar at the mouth of the Panjshir valley, a high-ranking Soviet officer and two soldiers, captured at the beginning of the month, are allegedly being held by insurgents. The rebels are negotiating with the authorities for their release, in exchange for five people arrested in 1982 for attempting to hijack a plane from Kandahar to Quetta.

Former Korean minister may get 10 years

Seoul (AP) - The prosecution yesterday demanded a 10-year sentence for Mr Yoon Ja Dong, the former Transport Minister, and terms ranging from one to 15 years for 21 other defendants in a trial arising from one of Korea's biggest bank scandals.

Mr Yoon, a retired air force chief of staff, was accused of receiving 81.8m won (£70,000) in bribes from co-defendant, Mr Kim Chul Ho, a leisure industry tycoon, in return for favours.

The prosecution asked that Mr Kim be jailed for 15 years on various charges.

Mr Yoon was the first former Cabinet member from President Chun Doo Hwan's government to be indicted on criminal charges.

Moscow fears bloody Afghan anniversary

By David Cross

The Soviet and Afghan authorities in Kabul are steeling themselves for what they fear may be a spectacular demonstration of guerrilla firepower to coincide with next week's fourth anniversary of the Russian invasion.

According to well-informed Western diplomatic sources, the capital has been uncannily quiet during December. This contrasts sharply with the situation in recent months when the mujahidin staged frequent attacks, often with mortars and rockets, on targets like the Soviet Embassy, Radio Afghanistan and troop headquarters.

The sources believe the rebel fighters may be using the lull to infiltrate the city, ready for a big military operation to mark next Tuesday's anniversary. There have been several reports to this effect, the sources say.



PAKISTAN 50 miles

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مكتبة من الأصل

SPECTRUM

A bumpy ride to fantasy

The Times Profile Roald Dahl

Roald Dahl told me that what made him a writer was a most monumental bash on the head ("we had been delving for literary sources")...

There was a silence in his sunny, low-ceilinged Buckinghamshire farmhouse while I digested this tale of the unexpected. One clock went tick-tic, tick-tic with the deliberate malicious advance of one of the characters in his adult stories about to brain someone with a frozen leg of lamb...

For more than 30 years a renowned author of macabre short stories - Kiss Kiss, Some Like You - Dahl is now also one of the world's leading writers of children's books. The Giant Peach had a successful run as an opera at Covent Garden; The Chocolate Factory was made into a film with Gene Wilder, and two more, Danny the Champion of the World and The BFG, will go into production soon.

His latest book, The Witches, was published recently. It blows the whistle on modern witches who look just like your schoolteacher or respectable aunt, but secretly they are bald, their spit is blue as bilberry, and to the little boys smell of dogs' droppings, fresh dogs droppings.

Could such a persistently fertile imagination have been induced just by a bash on the head?

Oh, yes, he said. He had been in the RAF, in the war flying out of Lihya in a Gloster Gladiator and it had hit the ground at 200mph, bashing his head off the reflector sight and flattening his nose. Having until then produced only dogged schoolboy letters, his first letter home from hospital was brilliant. He was a writer. A squashed one, but a writer.

Dahl is a very tall man with some of the stooping, anxious courtesy of Alastair Sim playing a children's

author, and much of the casual authority of the officer class.

Now 67, Dahl's life parallels in a curious way two strands of his fiction. It was full of adventure and scrupulous surprises: a 15-page children's story, The Gremlins (he invented the word), published in 1942 while he was a young air attaché in Washington, was such an astonishing success that he became frequent guest of Eleanor Roosevelt and FDR at the White House. This useful entrée was exploited by the boys at Whitehall who made him a spy - on the Americans. And he married a film star, Patricia Neal.

But his life also suffered blows from a particularly malicious fate.

His seven-year-old daughter contracted a rare form of measles and died. His young son was hit by a taxi in New York and suffered brain damage, and the story of Dahl's long struggle to help Patricia Neal recover from two massive strokes is well known. He's had many operations on his spine, a legacy of his plane crash.

Fantasy is very different from fiction

Storytellers are proud and rather defensive craftsmen. Says Dahl: "Novelists write from personal experience which they then just fictionalize, all of them, without any question! But we are talking about fantasy, which is very different from fiction." Children's storywriters, perhaps mindful of the severity of their shrill-voiced clients, would not like to admit to any intellectuality. So a blow on the head is a more satisfactory literary source than Belloc, which did influence him.

And Amthor Bierce. The first adult book that gave him the creeps was Can Such Things Be? "Quite a good title," Dahl said, with envious approval.

"The real stylistic influence was Hemingway," Dahl said. "The short



Dahl pensive: "The real stylistic influence was Hemingway." Photographs by Suresh Karadia

sentence, use of adjectives. I knew Hemingway well.

"The great maxim he gave me was 'When you are going good, stop writing'. Terrific, because then you can pick up again. Old Hemingway gave me that advice and said it was his invention and I told it to Henry Moore who doesn't live far from here, in Hertfordshire, and I said this must be the same with your work when you are going good, chipping away at whatever. 'Exactly,' he said. 'But it wasn't Hemingway,' he said, 'I've got the book by my bed'. So the old boy went up to his bedroom, upstairs two at a time and brought down Conversations with Goethe. Goethe had said the same thing!"

He smiled at the notion that this trade secret was shared by so many disciplines and generations.

"I don't know where my ideas come from. Perhaps my Norwegian background is an influence. Plots just wander into my head. They are like dreams, one is terrified of losing them. Once I stopped the car and got out and wrote a word or two on the dust of the boot lid so I wouldn't forget an idea."

He spoke of the difficulty of writing children's stories, of getting it right.

"My theory," Dahl said, "is that by the time a person becomes skilful enough at his writing trade he is usually in his 30s and really has forgotten what it's like to be a child. He has lost touch with it even if he had got children of his own."

How did you manage to keep contact? "Oh I'm a bit of a jockey fellow you know, childish on one side of me."

The characters in Dahl's adult stories are vengeful creatures, generally scoring over the other moral lepers. In one, "Pig", an innocent young man, a lapsed vegetarian, is slit up for sausage meat.

"That is an odd story," he remarked, almost as if he had not written it himself. "It's an anti-human being story."

Unlike children's stories which are full of exuberance and optimism, is Dahl expressing a kind of disgust with adults?

"I think you can't help that after a time. Unless you are doing a P. G. Woodhouse. There is an enormous difference between a child who is primarily innocent and an adult who has become vengeful and greedy and everything else. You know as well as I that most adults are not very likeable people. I mean, Christ, we wouldn't have six wars going on right now if they were. They are not likeable people."

This brought us to the new field entered by Dahl recently with catastrophic results; political controversy. Asked in August to review God Cried, an account of the Israeli invasion of Lebanon, for the Literary Review, he plunged into a headlong attack on all Israelis, and to many it appeared an attack on Jews.

'Shove them all in the dock with handcuffs'

Dahl still gets abusive telephone calls. School librarians have written to say they have taken his books off their shelves, and he showed me a letter from a Leeds councillor who had sent back his child's copy of The Enormous Crocodile.

A close inspection of Dahl's review, entitled "Not a Chivalrous Affair", reveals a curious stylistic affinity with his children's stories. It is in fact a tale of a chivalrous young airman - Dahl

himself - flying over Lebanon and allowing young ladies in white dresses down below, drinking wine with their pilot boy friends, to run for cover before strafing the enemy airfield. Then when the Israelis plunge, without chivalry, into this same territory 40 years later they must be routed like the witches. Exuberantly! Indiscriminately! "Shove them all in the dock with handcuffs on! You will become violently anti-Israeli when you read God Cried. You simply won't be able to help yourself", he wrote.

Dahl, the fiction and the fantasy writer, had refused to observe the conventions of international political debate.

Why not? "I don't care about them. You don't do things by halves."

He said he was "cross and angry" that people should accuse him of anti-Semitism. "I am not in the least anti-Semitic. And there is nothing racist in my books."

But didn't he appear to be inviting the Arab nations to rise up and annihilate Israel?

"I should have said that the Israeli Labour Party was violently against this, and given them credit for it. But it was written so fast and so emotionally. But that's beside the point. The fact remains that there were about 24,000 people, mostly civilians, killed in that war. I am angry that you cannot protest against this kind of thing without being called anti-Semitic."

He pointed out that his story Genesis and Catastrophe was "a cry from the heart" at the bitter irony that in the Schikigruber family Adolf was the one male child who did survive.

He has now turned to less explosive matters: he is working on sketches of his school days.

Peter Lennon

The Witches is published by Jonathan Cape at £6.50.

Alan Franks discovers how the admen tune in to your wallet Jingling all the way to the bank

In the beginning was the carol, which begat the jingle, which begat colossal revenue for the manufacturers of cigarette lighters and Cyprus sherry. If that is a simplistic, not to say profane, version of how the season's advertising melodies came into being, remember that carolling is in essence the selling of a message, and some of the most enduring of the species are those with what is nowadays called a good hook. That may not be a phrase which would have sat easily in the vocabulary of a Stanford or a Holst, but the impulse to wrap an idea in a cadence was there none the less.

Whether you are celebrating the nativity, or a more tangible form of consumer durable, tunes are a vital ally. Small wonder then that the airtime occupied by jingles on television and radio increases by up to 20 per cent at this time of year. Contrary to popular opinion, the writing of these mini-numbers - few top the 40-second mark - is not so much a licence to print money as a punishing exercise in compliance with the demands of hi-tech production.

One of our leading jinglers, Richard Harvey, who has done much for the image of a certain tender-fresh coconut confection in a rich chocolate coating, describes the collaborative process like this: "Mostly the writers get copy from the advertising agency and say it's a load of rubbish which should be rewritten to scan. Then the agency says it must have all these words in because that's what they've agreed with the client. And after that, a fight tends to occur."

The fight is usually fierce and furious; the client's unwieldy package of key selling words versus the composer's already deeded self-respect. It is deep in the heart of these brawls that the reason can be found for the relentless duplication of jingles. It is not that the composers are second-rate hacks incapable of invention - quite the reverse - but that there is just half a minute in which to set a nearly uniform



number of words to music; hence the repetition of shape and tempo. Knowing that George Martin, whose arrangements gave the Beatles such sophistication, has a few skeletons jingling in his musical cupboard, I asked him what it took to succeed in the firm. "It's all a question of using a tiny number of notes for their most immediate impact," he said. "And then he started humming: 'Murraymints, Murraymints, too good to hurry-mints... that for me remains the best of all time. Yes I know, I'm rather old. It was written by a chap called Johnny Johnson, who's even older than me.' Then I bummed: 'Why make haste when you can taste the hint of mint in Murraymints,' and he said, 'There you are. See how it stays in the memory.'"

I had to put the heretical question - whether Paul McCartney, his most famous protégé, was now or had ever

with almost any style, from punk (for a certain bank that likes to say yes) through to light classical (for a sound system manufacturer with show-jumping connexions) and vox humana (for a chocolate bar with bubbles in it).

In an industry which has seen nothing but growth from the first days of commercial TV, it sounds as though there should be rich pickings for the composers, but earnings can be little more than peanuts in the jingle. On a flat rate basis, the writers can expect from £500 for a single tune to about £5,000 for a series. As Maggie Garard points out, you cannot forecast the catchiness of a jingle until it is launched.

At this point she too started humming: "Cook, cook, cookability, that's the beauty of gas... that's a very good example of one that turned into a long-runner. It started as a Middle of the Road arrangement, then we had the Suzy Quatro version, and now the Vivaldi. All the same tune."

One thing for which the jingle receives scant credit is its influence on "legit" pop; this sector borrows hooks and learns techniques from its mini-cousins in much the same way that the film industry benefits from commercials.

In some instances the jingle can even burst from the chrysalis and become a hit in its own right, the most famous example being Roger Greenaway's "I'd Like to Teach the World to Sing," which started life as a bynum to the merits of an American fizzy drink with world sales.

The form can also be splendid training ground for composers of more substantial music. Howard Blake, whose excellent album for children, The Snowman, has just been released, will not thank me for reminding him, but there is a certain light ale for whose popularity his music must take much credit. I can only hope he is so hard at work on an oratorio for Plácido Domingo and the New York Philharmonic that he will not be reading this.

moreover... Miles Kington

Gripping yarns on TV

In 1980 the BBC dipped into its pocket with reckless abandon and sent seven journalists across the globe to make Great Railway Journeys. I landed up in Peru, where I spent a lot of my time thinking that the behind-the-scenes drama of making a TV film was better value than what got on the screen. Brian Thompson landed up in India, where he must have had exactly the same notion as he chugged up and down the sub-continent, because he has now written a play called Turning Over which is all about a film crew and a presenter who are sent out to India to make a programme.

It's currently on at the Bush Theatre, very funny, very well acted, etc (which I can safely say I have never met Mr Thompson). But the curious thing is that the day after I saw it, I flew out to Jordan for four days with a BBC film crew and spent most of the time wondering if I was in real life, television or a Brian Thompson play. I wasn't really with a film crew, I suppose, but following one; I've become involved with a programme about the making of the latest David Attenborough natural history epic, and the Attenborough outfit were on their very last foreign location trip after three years of rushing about.

No wild life was involved, oddly enough. They wanted to film the earliest settlement of man they could find. There were four possible candidates as sites: two in Iraq and Iran and thus too dangerous, one in Turkey but totally unphotogenic and one in Jordan. The trouble with the Jordan one was that nobody knew much about it except its name, Beidha, and the name of the woman who discovered it in 1956 and excavated it, Diana Kirkbride. Was it worth going out to film? The producer's answer to the problem, which would never have occurred to me, was to ring up Diana Kirkbride and ask her: it is worth filming?

The answer was a massive Yes, so much so that he promptly decided to ask her out as well. And that is how she and I came to be standing side by side in a rocky valley in the Jordanian desert last Tuesday, watching David Attenborough squat in the 9,000-year-old ruins.

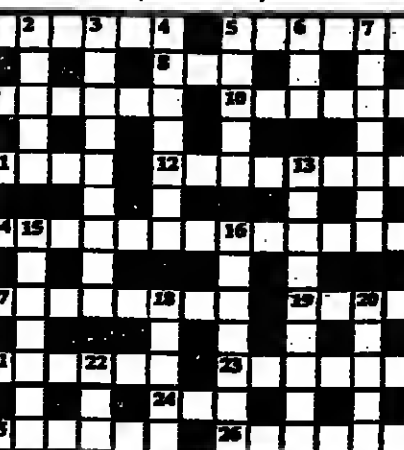
"These neolithic men", he told the camera, "found that instead of wandering in search of crops, they could keep the seeds and scatter them on the ground to grow next year. They had turned from being nomads into farmers..."

"Hold it", said Dicky, the sound man. "We're getting birds."

You wouldn't think you could get sound pollution in the desert, but there above us, high over the cliffs, whacked four or five ravens making harsh black noises. We shouted at them to go away. We told them we were the BBC and ordered them to shut up. We threatened them with David Bellamy. It was then the Diana Kirkbride turned to me and said: "I don't know anything about television, but it does seem odd that wildlife can be such a nuisance to people making a wildlife film."

Odd is not the word. The only reason I was there was that I was making a TV programme about the making of a TV programme. The only reason that nobody has heard of Beidha is that Diana Kirkbride does not seek publicity - in other words, nobody has ever made a TV programme about it, or her. The only reason we didn't continue filming when the ravens finally flew off is that the Bedouins' sheep and cockerets started making a noise - there was a Bedouin encampment right behind the archaeological site, with herds of goats coming and going like commuter trains. The Bedouins represented a far more ancient way of life than the one we had come to film, but we were not there to film them or ravens or Diana Kirkbride, so we didn't. Given the chance, I think I'd film Diana, especially after I overheard her say: "Cole Porter came to see us when we were excavating Petra, and we got him up the cliff but we couldn't get him down again. Wheelchairs are very tricky on cliffs."

CONCISE CROSSWORD (No 230)



ACROSS: 1 Crucial moment (6) 2 Ardent lover (5) 3 Systematic plan (6) 3 Brise (9) 4 Muscle twitch (3) 4 Sausage's earlier boy (7) 5 Hinder (6) 5 Operatic solo (5) 6 Not him (3) 7 Japanese emperors (7) 8 exclamation (6) 8 Not him (3) 9 Dressage circle (4) 9 (7) 11 Headlong rush (8) 10 Usenet power broker (8,5) 11 Bullfighter (7) 12 Naked (8) 12 Fundamental nature (7) 13 Loves deeply (6) 13 Literary composition (5) 14 Curved shape (3) 14 Expect (5) 15 Fashionable (6) 15 Spout (3) 16 Early Stone Age tool (6) 16 (6)

SOLUTION TO 229: ACROSS: 1 Fodder 4 Patter 7 Nile 8 Lingerie 9 Defector 12 Men 15 Plinth 16 Egrets 17 Ska 19 Algorithm 24 Crevasse 25 Crop 26 Fallen 27 Dormer DOWN: 1 Funk 2 Doler 3 Relic 4 Panto 5 Trek 6 Elite 10 Extra 11 Roger 12 Misdemeanor 13 Nosc 14 Apes 18 Karma 20 Lysin 21 Orad 22 Evil 23 Spurs

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BOOKS

Fiona MacCarthy reviews the life of John Gray, possibly the model for Dorian Gray
The young decadent who saw the Catholic light

In the Dorian Mode
By Brocard Sewell
(Tabb House, Padstow, £18)

When in the year 2000 the neglected masterpiece of the past century are finally assembled, among them will be Park, John Gray's "fantastic story", a short and dreamlike novel of extraordinary brilliance, in which the hero, Dr Mungo Park, dies and reawakes and seems to find himself in an England of the future inhabited by a new race of black Catholics, who are technically tremendously sophisticated, while the rodent-like descendants of degenerate white Englishmen live underground in wonderfully excavated caverns...

Dowson's) in the style of the French symbolists; a hauger-on of Wilde's, and possibly the model for the Dorian Gray of Oscar's novel. John Gray anyway made the most of the connexion, and signed his letters "Dorian" to Wilde and other friends. All the more surprising to find him, some years later, a parish priest in Edinburgh: no ordinary priest but a priest of an almost legendary decorum whose genuflection at the words "Et incarnatus est" in the Creed was, agreed the experts, a lesson in reverence. Two Archbishops and the whole cathedral chapter of St Andrews and Edinburgh, with a hundred other priests and sorrowful parishioners, crowded into his church for the pontifical Requiem Mass in June 1934, when John Gray died.

Brocard Sewell describes well these two strange, contrasted worlds. He is good on the shimmering equivocal literary London of the fin-de-siècle: the Cafe Royal society and the Uranian underworld in which John Gray once moved; the sophisticated friendships with such esoteric couples as Ricketts and Shannon (Ricketts bound Gray's poems, Silverpoint), and the female "versicles" (the word is Ernest

lunches, which Gray always attended, brought a touch of excitement in those northern suburbs, with excellent grapes from Raffalovich's vine. Raffalovich's housekeeper, devoted Florence Gribbell, who when she was unable to sleep would compose menus, is another of the very congenial minor personae with which this finely-detailed book abounds. Gray may or may not have been Raffalovich's lover (just as John was possibly but not quite definitely Dorian). Such conundrums, though in their way undeniably intriguing, end up by not appearing especially important. For what comes over strongly is a clear and moving sense of the enduring and indeed the redemptive possibilities of friendship quite apart from niceties of its sexual expression. The relationship between Raffalovich and Gray in its Edinburgh days was in fact extremely formal, a set exchange of visits between 9 Whitehouse Terrace and John Gray's study at the Rectory, Sunday night. A friend remembered later: "Canon Gray,



John Gray circa 1892

A right to browse

Blackwell's 1879-1979
By A. L. F. Norrington
(Blackwell, £12.50)

Not all bookshops approve of browsing. But in Blackwell's of Oxford, it is a constitutional right, printed and posted on the wall. The rubric begins: "When you visit Blackwell's no one will ask what you want. You are free to ramble where you will, to handle any goods, in short, to browse at leisure. The staff are at your service when you need them; but unless you look to them, they will leave you undisturbed. You are equally welcome whether you come to buy or browse."

Oddly, neither the wall rubric nor Sir John's reminiscence is included in Sir Arthur Norrington's history of the firm. But just about everything else is. It is a dry read, full of those tribute-paying passages to which such histories are prone. ("He was one of the kindest, sweetest-natured and most cheerful of men, ready to turn a hand to any job. His neat handwriting was an example to everyone, and his maps, diagrams, and marginal drawings were used extensively in the production of Carter and Brentnall's Geography series *Man the World Over*."

Tales of Abbot's Ale

Greene King
By Richard G Wilson
(The Bodley Head & Cape, £10)

It is generally a bad sign when you are reviewing a book if you fall asleep with the volume open in your hands. I am sorry to say that this happened to me twice in the course of reading this sound account of the East Anglian brewers, Greene King by a lecturer in Economics and Social History at the local University. No, I had not been drinking "Abbot" or "IPA", two of the strongest ales made famous by this splendidly independent outfit: it was just that some of the finer points of maling, mashing, marketing and mergers expanded here failed to absorb me as I had hoped.

Nothing wrong, you understand, with the gore of company history (I once earned a crust editing a weighty study of a Lancashire paper mill), nor is this anything other than highly competent or scholarly, but its subtitle ("A Business and Family History") led me to expect rather more in the way of human interest. Presumably as an act of family piety, it has been brought out by two publishing houses associated with the Greene dynasty, Sir Hugh (chairman of the brewery 1971-78), whose biography was recently published by The Bodley Head, is certainly enjoying a good innings this season.

The Greenses, like their infinitely richer Irish counterparts the Guinnesses (with whom they are connected through Sir Hugh's first marriage), afford another example of the classic progression from business and money, to titles and land, and then activity in the arts. The brewery was founded at Bury St Edmunds in 1806 by a draper's son, Benjamin Greene who went on to become a slaveholder and newspaper proprietor. One of Benjamin's sons became an able Governor of the Bank of England; another, who was the first chairman of Greene King (merged in 1887) became an MP and was the father of a landowning baronet fond of hunting, shooting, yachting and practical jokes. Benjamin's youngest son, a hopeless failure, was the grandfather of the great Graham who shared with his brother Hugh "a long held interest in sampling the beers of different breweries". GG is not the only novelist to be produced by the dynasty for Christopher Isherwood's maternal grandmother was a Greene.

In all fairness, Mr Wilson writes well about the various characters, not just Greenses, involved in the story - though as a Yorkshireman he cannot resist digs at "paternalism" - and has plenty to say about our changing drinking habits. The "business" side, however, is weighed down by technical details and statistics. One shares his relief when he chances on such items as the litigation over the overflowing urinal at the "Cock" in Castle Camps. A worthwhile book? Up to a pint, Sir Hugh.

Hugh Montgomery-Massingberd

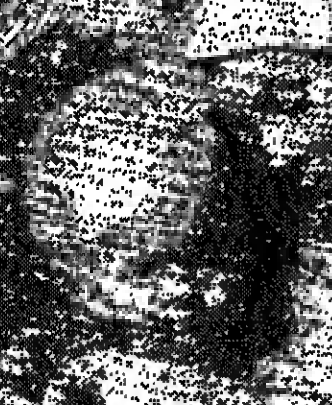
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Getting id and ego right

Freud and Man's Soul
By Bruno Bettelheim
(Chatto & Windus, £6.95)

"Freud," wrote Thomas Mann "writes a highly perspicacious prose. He is an artist of thought, like Schopenhauer, and, like him, a European author."

Bruno Bettelheim's brief, perceptive and important book shows how Freud's English translators saw his work as "science" and played down its humanist, philosophical tradition. The Greek psyche, the German Seele which the English standard edition refers steadily to as "mental life", Freud, Bettelheim suggests, "chose the term (Seele) because of its inexactitude, its emotional resonance."



Bettelheim gives several examples of words where James Strachey coined new Greek- or Latin-derived terms to represent words which in Freud

come from current, colloquial German. The puzzling "cathexis" in German is simply *Besetzung* or "occupation"; *Schaulust*, pleasure in looking, desire to see, becomes "scopophilia". "Parapraxis" translates a witty word made by Freud from two others, *Fehlleistung*, from *Fehl*, an error, *Leistung*, an achievement; a "mischievement" as Walter Kaufmann suggested. The Greek words reify and distance descriptions of behaviour or feelings which in the German are still close to actual observation, or patient and analyst.

Perhaps the most pervasive cultural influence of the translation has been the Latinizing of Freud's "three provinces of the apparatus of soul". In German these are *Ich*, *Es* and *Uber-ich*, rendered by Bettelheim *I*, *It* and *Above-I*, and by Strachey as *ego*, *id* and *superego*. Bettelheim objects to these last on both therapeutic and larger aesthetic grounds. In therapy, he says, people say, and should say, "I am trying to understand why I did this." Not "My ego is trying to understand why I did this."

In *Freud and the Future* Thomas Mann spoke of Freud in the tradition of Goethe, Nietzsche, Schopenhauer. His formal, convoluted, complicated tributes plays on the word "I" or *Ich* throughout. He speaks of the "ancient I", *das ontike Ich* of an Alexander, who was a God, of a Napoleon who said "I am Charlemagne". "Not," Mann repeats, "I resemble, or I recall" but "Ich bin". Mann's peroration revealed to us ourselves, the nervous, isolated modern "I" and of how he saw his work of strengthening it as a cultural work, akin to the draining of the *Zuyder Zee*. "Wo Es war soll Ich werden" said Freud epigrammatically. "Where it was roust I be." Mann's translator, bedevilled by Freud's changes of horses in midstream, talks distantly of the "modern ego", *das moderne Ich*, responsible between the "I's of Alexander, Napoleon, Mann himself, and Freud.

"Where id was let there be ego." A retranslation could not undo the years of thought, felicitous as well as infelicitous, conducted with the aid of these too solid imaginary objects. All the more do we need books like Bettelheim's to keep us alert and supple, to remind us of the complex nature of language and translation, culture and history, the limitations of their power, the power of their limitations.

A. S. Byatt

Grove for the home

The New Oxford Companion to Music
Edited by Denis Arnold
(Oxford, £30)

The *New Oxford Companion to Music*, a refurbished version of Percy A. Scholes' original work, has to be *Grove for the Home*. At £50, or £37.50 if you opt in and buy it before the end of January, instead of £1,100 it is markedly cheaper. And it does take up rather less shelf room: two volumes, admittedly weighty ones, instead of twenty. Quite a lot of the contributors are shared, a mixture of critics whose names are familiar in the *Dailies* and *Sundays* and academics who are careful to confine themselves to learned journals. Certainly the new OCM looks good. Professor Arnold has scoured the picture libraries, or perhaps his assistants have: whether you turn up Carter, Elliott, or Chalumeau the illustration will not be the obvious one. The individual entries, though, show rather less flair. Solidity not controversy is the order of the day, and a very English solidity at that. Inevitably there is a temptation

to check out one's special interests first and the opera sections are not among the best in the OCM. There is, for instance, no clear editorial line on providing synopses for standard works. *Il trovatore* and *Les Troyens*, on last night, T, each get a scene by scene outline of the plot while *Otello*, arguably the greatest of Italian operas, is dismissed in ten lines with the comment: "... the opera follows Shakespeare closely, although the Venetian first act is omitted."

Librettists receive an even rougher deal. There may be a case, although I would not care to argue it, for leaving out *Plavce* or *Melba*, but to omit *Da Ponte*, *Lorenzo*, is inexcusable. What would Mozart have done without him? On the other hand anyone curious to know what Johnny Ringling had to do with Turkish music will find enlightenment. You cannot please all the people all the time. And at £37.50 the OCM is almost exactly the price of a single ticket to Covent Garden's *Otello*... also an opera by Rossini (1816), in case you did not know.

John Higgins

Pevsner of the elm

Elm
By R.H. Richens
(Cambridge, £35)

Elm. Just like that. Not even a definite article, let alone a subtitle, and only the briefest of publisher's blurbs, as though this were not the sort of book that anyone could be seriously expected to buy. Well admittedly £35 is a lot of money, even these days. But this is no ordinary book. It is a work of immense scholarship, the product of years of devoted research, and yet, even for the reader who knows little or nothing about trees, much of it is not just readable but fascinating. The oak, the ash and, until its recent tragic near-obliteration by disease, the elm have for centuries dominated the English rural landscape. Of this great trio the elm has been perhaps the most loved and the most frequently serenaded. As Mr Richens remarks, to identify with the English landscape has often meant to identify with an English elm.

But unlike the oak and the ash, the elm is not a native species. Correction. The Weib Elm, which flourishes mainly in northern England and on the Welsh borders, made its own way here sometime in the aftermath of the last Ice Age. The more familiar Field Elm, of which there are many varieties, was brought here and planted either for decorative purposes or because of its splendid versatility as a raw material.

Since then, as this book reminds us, it has become absorbed not just into our landscape but into our history, art, literature, and even diet and medicine. Mr Richens is an admirably eclectic chronicler. He has been fortunate, if that is the word, in his timing since, when he first began assembling material some 30 years ago, he could not have foreseen that the elm would become an object of national concern and lament. Indeed he makes no more than passing reference to Dutch Elm Disease, observing that to have included it in detail would have seriously unbalanced the book.

To call it the last word on the elm might be misconstrued. But surely all that will now be needed is either an epitaph to record its final demise or a chapter recording how it was to be resurrected. As Mr Richens believes, there is a reasonable chance it will.

John Young

Madonna and Child by Andrea della Robbia in the Metropolitan Museum, New York, from Carols for Christmas, compiled and arranged by David Wilcocks (Gollancz, £9.95).

Bits of the best of British fiction of the year

A Christmas Feast
Edited by James Hale
(Macmillan, £8.95)

This Christmas fare, prepared by Macmillan to replace its long-standing *Winter's Tales*, has all the fascination of a free sack of quality goodies. Although there are still some excellent short stories, the bulk of the book is composed of chapters taken from novels which the editor takes to be the Best of British for the year. No one will have read them all (except I must suppose, those poor, exhausted Booker judges). So at the very least it's an excellent way of discovering what you've missed.

The piece from Russell Hoban's *Pilgermann* amused me enough to send me out for the book. (I wish I could say it was on sale at my local bookshop, but no.) So all I can report is that a peculiarly unfortunate victim of a pogrom is calling on God for help, and is astonished to receive a vision of Christ instead. It's no use Pilgermann insisting that up till this point he had always dealt directly with His Father, or

complaining "You're not the one I was calling." Christ replies: "I am the one who came though."

Another book I hadn't read and feel I now will is William Cooper's *Scenes from Later Life*. The title recalls Cooper's earliest work, which must surely have influenced both Aris and Wain, but whose own reputation has trailed a little. This piece about the awkwardness between a middle-aged son and his 92-year-old mother in hospital, is written with warmth and pathos as well as a sense of human absurdity.

There were other intriguing snippets. I have been intending for some time to read Anita Brookner's *Look at Me* and was impressed by the cruel accuracy of her perceptions. The extract lets us in on a married couple, who invite a friend with them on holiday, mainly to demonstrate the perfection of their marriage, and hoping, at any rate, that a beggar at the feast will confirm they are indeed better off together. Then, of course, there were the novels already admired, and now looked at mainly to

Fiction

Nowhere. But there might surely also have been some Alan Sillitoe, or Emma Tennant? By and large, though, a pleasantly digestible Christmas Feast.

Elaine Feinstein
Into the landscape of the dead
Falls the Shadow
By Emanuel Litvinoff
(Michael Joseph, £8.95)

Kingsley Amis is on record recently as declaring he would no longer read any novel in which a gunshot did not ring out in the very first paragraph. Some surprises would await him in this one. The body that slumps dead over the first page of Emanuel Litvinoff's latest novel leads the reader into labyrinth of shadows, the

darkness of which is the shadow upon which the State of Israel has unreasonably founded itself. Shomron, the laconic Israeli detective has no difficulty in discovering the assassin Sinauer. Apparently English, he is only too eager to declare himself. What becomes worrying is the motive that leads him to anticipate his own trial with such joy? Shomron, is a Sabra, proud to throw off the anxious stance of the ghetto Jew, and his family troubles, including those of his brother-in-law, concern him as much as the case he is handling. Until, that is, Messad takes a hand in his investigations; and we are taken into a world, as alien as another planet, which satiated both the victim and his assassin with the numbers of Dachau. So it is we enter a landscape of the dead, peopled by ghosts who may yet be alive; and listen in on the madness and the morality of choices we have all been spared. This is a remarkable novel: incisive, always questioning, and never, for one moment, dull.

Elaine Feinstein

Another great game

A Hitch or Two in Afghanistan
By Nigel Ryan
(Weidenfeld & Nicolson, £8.95)

In August 1982 Sandy Gall, known to TV-watchers, invited camera man Charles Morgan, sound engineer Tom Murphy and Nigel Ryan author of this book to lunch at Bertelli's in Charlotte Street (what a lot of plots have been hatched in Bert's) to discuss an expedition to film Ahmed Shah Massud, a young resistance leader and his Mujahideen operating against the Russians in the Panjshir valley, north-east of Kabul in Afghanistan. Ryan, who has considerable experience in presenting TV news, was preparing to write a book about it, and knows his Kipling and Edward Lear, and was to produce a film and act as Quartermaster and Paymaster of the expedition. He wrote the specification - Sandy Gall asked for black underwear to show up the lice - and negotiated the budget with Central TV for something like £60,000.

Sandy Gall's method of leadership was to be supremely confident and optimistic at all times. The expedition was to leave in three weeks. Part of the agreement with the Mujahideen leaders was that the expedition should be responsible for hiring transport and horses, while food would be supplied by the Resistance. What was apparently not appreciated was that Mujahideen were hard as nails and normally half-starved, living mainly on yoghurt, rice and sweet tea with a little goat thrown in from time to time.

The book deserves an index.

Gontran Goulden

Anyone who's too mean to serve Smirnoff will want to make use of this sign.
Scale of charges
P Reindeer per hour £2
Sledges per hour £3
SMIRNOFF
IF IT ISN'T SMOOTH IT ISN'T SMIRNOFF

THE TIMES DIARY

Who needs enemies?

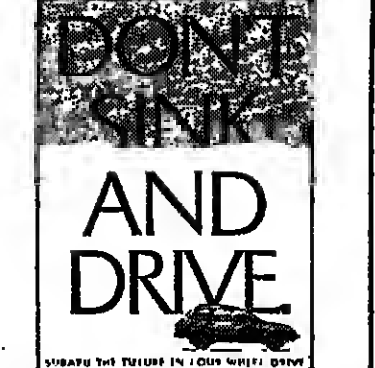
One of the last letters written by Tony Banks, the Labour MP for Newham in North West, before he resigned as chairman of the GLC's Arts and Recreation Committee was to George Levy, chairman of the Friends of Kenwood - the historic house near Hampstead Heath. In it, Banks takes a stern tone towards the Friends' efforts to persuade the Government to set up an independent trust for Kenwood. "I understand, of course, that the Friends of Kenwood will have a greater concern for Kenwood than for any other cause. But for their concern for Kenwood is so limited and so exclusive, does Kenwood need such friends? Do we, in our private lives, wish friends who will be friends to no one but ourselves? Such friends are too cautious to defend, or even attack, another than their chosen object of devotion. Their affection and dedication are real enough, but are they welcome?" He then goes on to quote the passage from Donne's *Devotions* that begins, "No man is an island..." Mr Levy remained calm under the weight of so many admonishments. He wrote back: "It is... our particular concern to look after the interests of Kenwood and its magnificent grounds, and in this regard it would be most helpful if Members of Parliament could find time to write constructive letters of help, rather than find fault with those of us who do unpaid work for the community."

Late post

Yesterday, London's chief post office by St Paul's Cathedral, three of the four clerks were showing the wrong time. The clerks are more than a century old and because the post office is a listed building, cannot be replaced by newer models. In spite of the building's antiquity, a television set showing Post Office commercials has been installed on the serving floor. This was functioning perfectly.

Fluid drive

Subaru, the Japanese car company, has recently been running an advertisement advising readers, "Don't sink and drive". Last week one of its salesmen, Peter Danby-Smith, had to abandon his Subaru after it failed to negotiate a flooded ford in Yorkshire. It was washed downstream till it became stuck



under a bridge. After it had been dislodged by a tractor and a breakdown wagon, Mr Danby-Smith found a roadblock on the driving seat. "But it wasn't much of a consolation", he says.

Mass appeal

Andrew Palmer, head of the Foreign Office department which deals with the Falkland Islands and Britain's relations with Argentina, provided an end-of-term treat for his junior staff which was both entertaining and educational - he took a party of 24 to see *Evita*. Palmer and his deputy, Roger Westbrook, had found as the Argentine elections approached, that some of their staff did not really understand what Peronism was. Palmer said: "One of President Alfonsín's tasks now in working to solve the country's economic problems is to retain the support of the trade unions, many of which are Peronist-led. It's important to realize that Peronism remains a potent force. Everyone enjoyed the show very much and Palmer would like Andrew Lloyd Webber and/or Tim Rice to write a musical about Alfonsín's triumph, so that he can take a staff party to that too."

BARRY FANTONI



"Mind you, Mario Lanza didn't have it all his own way to begin with"

Cold comfort

Britoil has chosen a painting from Glasgow Museum for its Christmas card this year. It is called *The Day of Rest, Winter View Greenock*, painted in 1904 by Patrick Downie and shows the very spot where the Scott Lithgow yard's huge probable closure and the loss of more than 4,000 jobs after Britoil's cancellation of its order for a \$86m deep sea drilling rig.

Auntie's festive low-de-low

David Hewson describes the danger signs for the BBC as it battles to regain its Christmas ratings

The BBC wants but one thing for Christmas: an audience as big and devoted to Auntie as it used to be. Try as the corporation might, the viewers have deserted it for the other side in droves. Tomorrow the tinsel and glitter-ridden bandwagon of the Christmas schedules is rolled out in an attempt to win back these viewers. The rumour hotline within Broadcasting House currently has it that managerial topplings will shortly follow if normal service is not resumed and maintained over the holiday.

The corporation is genuinely bemused over why it should be doing so badly in the ratings. It has not exactly been scheduling a seven-part series on *The Life of the Loafah* at peaktime on Saturday nights, or producing such quintessentially diabolical drama of yore as the *Borgias*. Yet the figures remain doggedly rotten. For the week ending December 11, the BBC had one programme in the ratings top ten. *The Two Ronnies*, which came in sixth. The commercial network, with Channel 4, attracted 54 per cent of the total audience, eight points ahead of the two BBC channels.

A quick trawl among the BBC's rivals reveals an unusual accord over where the blame lies. The scheduling has been lousy, according to one ITV executive. "When we came out with *The Winds of War* they did nothing against us on the first night. We pulled in the viewers and they have stuck with us. ITV has had a strong schedule, of course, but the BBC handed us a lot on a plate. Just look at Sunday nights - *By The Sword Divided* has provided a good evening for us as well. And *Sixty Minutes* has been a disaster."

This is a viewpoint shared by the advertising industry. Young and Rubicam, one of the leading television agencies, says: "While much of ITV's success can be attributed to its strong programme line-up for the month (September), BBC's schedule in comparison was

undoubtedly its worst for some considerable time. The extent of ITV's dominance is shown by the fact that not a single BBC programme appeared in BARB's (Broadcasting Audience Research Board) listing of the month's top 50 rating programmes."

The BBC hopes that the holiday will provide some reversal of its fortunes. Its £10m package is as predictable as a Christmas Day menu, 90-minute films of yesterday's successes such as *Last of the Summer Wine* and *All Creatures Great and Small*, and new versions of existing light entertainment programmes. There may be scarcely a new idea in the whole thing, though that is not necessarily bad for the ratings, but one wonders if this desperate recycling stands much chance of success.

The ITV companies are far more worried about maintaining their lead outside the holiday period than winning a battle for kudos within it. Even if the BBC gains a majority of the Christmas audience, it is by no means certain that it will recover any ground in January. The behaviour of the audience last Christmas seems to support the commercial network's attitude towards the holiday; then the viewing figures fell by 12 per cent, partly because of the number of people using video recorders to watch rooted films. With video ownership now around the five million mark, the trend is likely to continue this year.

The corporation cannot even count itself with the notation, current six months ago, that

television viewing itself is in decline. ITV's successful autumn, and the arrival of Channel 4, has actually increased the amount of time Britons spend in front of the set. In October, the average daily viewing per home reached 5.2 hours, 6 per cent more than in October 1982. The rise was wholly due to the commercial sector, viewing of BBC programmes fell by 6 per cent in the same period.

Had Channel 4 performed as well as it might, the news for the BBC would have been worse. But Jeremy Isaacs' organization is now beginning to find its feet, to the corporation's likely detriment. January sees the arrival of one glamorous mini-series, *The Far Pavilions* (while, oddly enough, Granada's literary adaptation of *The Red Rover* will go out on ITV 1) in a new scheduling policy. The result, placing Channel 4's more popular programmes together in blocks, should increase its present viewing share which, in the latest figures, stood at 5 per cent; although it may, of course, take viewers from ITV 1 instead of the BBC.

What is the BBC's reaction? Initially, it has been to bring up the shock troops, *Hi-de-hi*, which was once one of the corporation's most popular comedy shows, was dragged into the Sunday night schedules at least three weeks before planned in an effort to hold a few more viewers before *By The Sword Divided* thrust *Cromwell* in English in front of a lukewarm audience. The gambit failed; *Hi-de-hi* has failed to make the BBC's own Top Ten, let alone that of the television community

overall. Should Christmas go the same way, one must look to changes at Broadcasting House.

There is a school of thought which says that the BBC should be above chasing ratings since it is principally a public service broadcasting system. This line of reasoning is insidiously attractive. The BBC's director of television programmes, Brian Wenham, was forced to admit recently: "We are financially unable to compete with ITV's blockbusters in the way some of us would like."

If the corporation cannot compete on expensive drama, which now costs about £250,000 an hour to produce, could it concentrate on quality to dictate to mass appeal? Politics dictates otherwise. Next year, the corporation must enter into new negotiations about its future licence income. A new colour television licence of at least £60 a year is likely to be demanded by Broadcasting House. If its services can attract the regular attention of only about 45 per cent of the viewing public, the BBC's mandarins believe that they will come under intense pressure to justify their existence. For them, just as for the ITV companies, ratings have become an essential way of life, almost obliterated the fact that the BBC's reputation is almost wholly founded on programmes which are resolutely not of the common herd.

The corporation's potential January blockbuster, which has been juggled around the schedules after the fashion of a fading centre forward looking for the best place in a Fourth Division football team, is *Thornbirds*, the latest in a series of American mini-series, and by all accounts no better and no worse than its flaccid stablesmates.

It is flimsy stuff around which to set a cliffhanger about one of the world's great broadcasting institutions, and a measure of the stormy times facing a BBC torn in several contradictory directions.

Ronald Butt

Are the churches missing the point?

This is how the present life of man on earth, King, appears to me in comparison with that time which is unknown to us. You are sitting feasting with your ealdormen and thegns in wintertime; the fire is burning on the hearth in the middle of the hall, and all inside is warm, while outside the wintry storms of rain and snow are raging; and a sparrow flies swiftly through the hall. It enters in at one door and quickly flies out through the other. For the storm moments it is inside, the storm and wintry tempest cannot touch it, but after the briefest moment of calm, it flits from your sight; out of the wintry storm and into it again.

So this life of man appears but for a moment; what follows or indeed what went before, we know not at all. If this new doctrine brings us more certain information, it seems right that we should accept it.

It was in these words, according to Bede, that one of the chief men of Edwin of Northumbria answered the question the king put to each member of his council; whether they should become Christians. The midwinter imagery of this evocative story is a reminder that Christianity has always been principally about first and last things. Inevitably, it is also about things in between; about the conduct required of mankind on earth. How, logically, could a religion concerned with the essential nature and destiny of humanity be otherwise? But its claim to revelation of first and last things has been which its teaching first won the western world.

Today, however, it is the things between, here and now, that are dominant in the teaching of Christian priests and ministers. Their concern is concentrated on the details of political, social and economic action, and that is why, throughout this year, the debate about the proper relationship of Christianity to politics has rumbled on in the correspondence and other columns of *The Times*, and also widely elsewhere. Churchmen have been praised or blamed both for what they have said on such matters and also for being as involved as they are in them, irrespective of what they have said.

More no question have they been more heavily involved than in that of nuclear war. The Catholic hierarchy and the Anglican Synod have rejected demands from within their churches to support unilateral disarmament but (in search of consensus) both have moved well beyond the broad Christian imperative that nuclear "deterrence" is acceptable only as a means of maintaining peace through balance on the way to disarmament. They have entered the area of detailed political and strategic (rather than theological) argument, the Catholics criticizing the presence of cruise missiles in Britain and arguing for greater British control over them, the Anglicans calling for a commitment to "no first use".

The same tendency towards detailed political involvement is evident in church reactions to the running debate on the shape and dimensions of the welfare state and (particularly because of unemployment) to economic policy. It is, of course, self-evident that Christianity is a religion which should condition the action and thinking of anyone with the least claim to heed it. By its nature, it requires each individual to take responsibility when it is needed

for the well-being of others which must mean those in need and those without work.

But there is nothing, for instance, in Christian teaching which provides answers to the question when and whether the welfare of others is best assured by individual or communal action and, if by both, in what proportions. It can state the principle but cannot prescribe the means of practising it in social circumstances that are always transient. It can tell us that we should seek a society in which all point work, but it does not give us the science for achieving this. It cannot tell us, *ex cathedra*, whether work is better created by Keynesian economics or by relying on control of the money supply to defeat inflation.

Why, then, do churchmen increasingly express the imperatives of Christian principle in terms which imply, or even indicate, a particular political action. I put the question recently to a prominent member of the Anglican priesthood who is himself much concerned with the social implications of his creed. He was remarkably honest and candid, his answer boiling down to something like this. Nowadays, when it is harder for churchmen to point to a heaven (and he pointed) the ultimate questions are much harder to tackle. In a way, he said, the Anglican church is a very honest church and does not attempt to over-ride doubt with strong theological assertions, but tries to carry people with it in an age of doubt.

The implication was that the sociological concern of contemporary churchmen is, in part at least, a compensation for the uncertainties about ultimate questions in an age when, for so many, scepticism has gnawed at the fundamentals of faith. It is a phenomenon which I do not think is confined to one church.

Another Anglican priest spoke to me recently about the crowd of once-a-year attendees he expects at his church at midnight on Christmas Eve; of his uncertainty about how to address a crowd largely unknown to him, some of whom have come from the pub; of the fact that he has sometimes even been glad that there were one or two policemen among his congregation. Why do they go? They are, perhaps, like Bede's sparrow, coming in from the darkness for light and warmth and even searching in some way for a belief towards which the church, preoccupied with social action, is not always well placed to help them in an age which is not one of consensus.

The tendency of our time is for the clergy to allow respectable doubt on what used to be the unquestioned tenets of their creed, while holding with apparent certainty the vision of right and wrong as it might be perceived by the presenters of *Newsnight*. To change a 2,000-year-old conviction about marriage; to doubt parts of the Gospels is permissible. But it would not be respectable to question some of the obsessive ethics of the secular world. Yet if churchmen have few certainties to offer about the fundamentals, about first and last things, what special weight is to be attached to their attachment to particular social and political prescriptions? Their danger is that of missing the main point. It is not, I think, for social and political instruction that the churches are crowded on Christmas Eve.

Jonathan Sale

The Xfam way to a happy Oxmas

In the steam from the kettle, the flap of the envelope peeled up easily. It was an appeal for money, again. I like to check the children's letters to their grandparents for spelling but is often the content that makes me blush first.

"What I want costs £16.99," she wrote. "I am saving up for it but I have only got the 99p + Love, Rebecca. PS. Peter has got his BMX bike now so you needn't give me anything for that. But I am saving up for some Star Wars spaceships. This is what they cost."

There follows a catalogue of what it takes to equip Darth Vader's intergalactic fleet, each item in double figures and the total approaching three. My only consolation is that the youngest child makes no demands of a financial nature. That is because she is too young to write.

I corrected the worst of the spelling mistakes, added a full stop or two and revealed the flaps. It takes long enough to wheedle epistles to relatives out of them, without criticizing the ome element powerful enough to induce them to put pen to Snoopy writing-paper.

There is probably no harm done. The grandparents do not complain. They do not send cheques to the full amount, either; but money does find its way into post office accounts.

Rather than stand in their way, I have decided to put on a more professional basis the traditional Christmas pastime of extracting money from relatives old enough to know better. For the benefit of my children, and yours, I have been working on a series of formula letters which should prove as effective as the versions falling through letterboxes from the more grown-up (and worthwhile) charitable organizations. They should be copied out in neat handwriting, incorporating a few deliberate misspellings to add pathos.

be happy to provide any account numbers or paying-in slips for your effect. With warmest thanks for your past and future support.

Dear Gran, We at Peterfam are proud of our unrivalled record of eliminating administrative costs. No funds at all are diverted into loss-making activities such as expenditure on paper and envelopes, as these relate to your last birthday gift, and the stamps are courtesy of Toytown (we trust that the postman's surcharge is no great inconvenience). With best wishes for a prosperous New Year...

Spear Nona. Would YOU like to donate a doll? For a modest weekly outlay, YOUR name will be inscribed on the underwear of a Barbie or similar fine doll purchased by YOUR kind donation. Without YOUR core, this doll would be left high and dry on the shelf of the toyshop. Wouldn't YOU like to bring a smile to its precocious little lips and rounded cheeks? All credit cards taken. Goodbye, and God Bless...

Dear Aunt, Please find enclosed a picture entitled *Car Crashing into Tomato Ketchup Storage Vat* or possibly *Like Skywalker in the Grip of the Duvark Sun*. It was painted in the dark and the red is all green instead. This is because the Torch Fund is, like the batteries, extremely low, which is a grave handicap to artistic activity after parents have switched lights out. The above-mentioned lack of red is caused by serious losses and possibly thefts in the Fibre-Tip branch of this organization. I know that we can rely on your assistance in balancing the books. Unless, that is, you want to be bombarded with green smears every week during 1984. Yours ominously...

Dear Uncle, It is a sozoge irony of the festive season that in a class of happy, well-fed children, there is one handicapped by complete lack of a ZX100 Little Star-Battler Electro-gaming. This is not a Third World shanty-town but the capital city of a new democracy. Will you help to remedy this second? Will the ZX100 Electro-gaming be sent from a child's straight to the recipient for whom it is intended, that is, me. I can guarantee this absolutely, and would

Bernard Levin: the way we live now



Royal smokers: Edward VII, George V, Edward VIII and George VI - but how can David Simpson (right) say tobacco killed them?

Smoking: a small puff for a little less humbug

You all know the story of the Boy Scout troop who were asked what good deed they had done that day, and answered that they had taken an old lady across the road. "But why?" asks the scoutmaster, "did it need eight of you to do that?" "Because," comes the reply, "she didn't want to go". It is my belief that those eight precocious masters of the art of doing out people good against their will have grown up and are all working in the anti-smoking industry. Moreover, the leader of the patrol, whose uniform was covered with so many proficiency badges he could hardly stand upright, was Mr David Simpson, who is now the director of Action for Smoking and Health, known as ASH (my forthcoming study of the subject, which is the fruit of many years' detailed research, will show coelustively that acronyms give you lung cancer), and he hasn't changed a bit.

But this time I think he has Gone Too Far. He was replying, at the weekend, to a comment in the *Sunday Telegraph*, in which the writer had mildly deplored the fanaticism of the anti-smoking industry. Mr Simpson began in characteristic style by claiming that the writer's attitude stemmed from the fact that he is a heavy smoker; it really does seem impossible to get into Mr Simpson's head the fact that some people, regardless of their own habits, find genuinely repellent the desire of him and his kind to make everybody behave as they do themselves, and to harass, insult, intimidate and ultimately use the law against them until they do.

Well, there is one charge Mr Simpson cannot bring against me: my opposition to his fanaticism cannot be based upon my desire to go on smoking, because I don't smoke, and dislike the practice a good deal. I have never been a cigarette smoker; about once a month I used to smoke a cigar, but I doubt if my rate is now more than one a year. So at least I come with clean hands to the fray, and I shall be the last of them. I am not a believer that he will not argue that I am in the pay of the tobacco industry, though to judge from the correspondence I get whenever I write about this subject, the same cannot be said about some of his followers.

To the fray, however. The lengths to which the anti-smokers will go is exquisitely demonstrated in another part of Mr Simpson's reply. Defending (as of course I would also) the right of the Duke of Gloucester to be patron of the anti-smoking organization, he said that: "The duke's keen, active and concerned patronage of ASH reflects the seriousness of our work and responsibilities; and no doubt members of the royal family might wish ASH had been around for much longer, seeing that smoking killed our last four kings."

Our last four kings, as any standard reference book will confirm, were Edward VII, George V, Edward VIII and George VI, and one point must immediately be conceded to Mr Simpson: they are all undoubtedly dead. The matter, however, cannot be allowed to rest there, and it is the reason why it cannot be allowed to rest there that provides the subject of my remarks today.

Edward VII died, in 1910, at the age of 69, a span somewhat above average for those days. George V died in 1936 at 71 (par for the course), the Duke of Windsor at 73, well above average, and George VI at 57, well below it.

Four of these monarchs smoked; the last of them contracted lung cancer, and may be presumed to have died of it. As Mr Simpson knows, but will wriggle himself into scintilla rather than admit, the link between smoking and lung cancer, though undoubtedly very strong, cannot prove that any particular sufferer from the latter got it from the former, and still less can it prove that smoking was the only cause. Still, I certainly cannot prove the opposite case, and Mr Simpson is entitled to the probability that smoking killed George VI. One down and three to go.

Edward VII suffered from a

number of diseases (including lechery, gluttony and gambling, though even Mr Simpson would not claim that these are induced by smoking); he had typhoid in 1871, a form of appendicitis in 1902 and some bronchial trouble in the year of his death, which was very abrupt. There is no evidence from which we may conclude that he was "killed by smoking", and precious little that his smoking had everything to do with his final illness.

George V played golf, gave up drinking throughout the First World War (if it comes to that, George VI gave up smoking throughout the Second) and broke his pelvis in a riding accident in 1915, but he survived all these catastrophes without lasting harm. He also survived, though much more narrowly, a streptococcal infection picked up in 1928; that was eight years before his death, and he made a complete recovery from it. In his case there is not the slightest reason to suppose that smoking ever did him any harm at all.

Edward VIII enjoyed generally good health throughout his very long life; he was a fairly silly man most of the time, but again, Mr Simpson would presumably not argue that smoking causes softening of the brain. As for the present Queen, she doesn't smoke at all, and anyway is still alive, so that's all right.

Now estimate, to three places of decimals, the degree of self-deceptive intolerance from which a man must suffer to take the above facts and turn them into "smoking killed our last four kings". Having done that exercise, try working out how far you would trust the same man to tell you the time of day and get it right to fewer than three goes. It is not too tough to say that Mr Simpson and his kind are firmly convinced,

or at any rate behave as though they are convinced, that if any person first smokes and then dies, it must follow as the night the day that the smoking was the direct and sole cause of the dying. It is useless for me to tell Mr Simpson that my maternal grandfather smoked 50 cigarettes a day throughout his adult life (his last breath was used, literally, to inhale his last puff) and died at the age of 84, because he will undoubtedly reply that if grandpa hadn't smoked he would have lived to 168, and I cannot prove him wrong. But I can prove him reckless and absurd in his fanaticism, and on the whole I think I just have.

Smoking is undoubtedly dangerous; nobody should be encouraged to do it, or to admire it. It is also a fairly nasty habit. It undoubtedly aggravates many illnesses, and no less undoubtedly causes some of them, and fatalities therefrom. But no one can say that this man contracted lung cancer and died of it because he smoked, whether the corpse was of a king or a ratcheteer, and it is worth adding that some people contract lung cancer without ever setting eyes on a cigarette. A od to claim that "smoking killed our last four kings" is not merely nonsense; it is the thirteenth chime of the clock, which casts doubt on all that has gone before, and diminishes the effect of Mr Simpson's more sensible work.

It is well that there are organizations which seek to draw our attention to the dangers of smoking, but it is not at all well that the members of such organizations should behave as though smokers are *hostes humani generis*, or as though the rules of evidence do not apply to those who campaign to stop them smoking. Those of you who have German may take extra comfort from the following verse; it is impossible to translate generally, but I offer a very free version to my monoglot readers:

*Alkohol und Nikotin
Raff die halbe Menschheit hin:
Oft Alkohol und Rauch,
Stirbt die andere Hälfte auch.
If you smoke and if you drink,
It is later than you think:
If such poison's not your game,
You will perish just the same.*

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How the IRA bombs backfire in America

New York The Harrods bomb, which claimed an American among its five victims, has made many Americans think hard.

In the past 12 years people in the United States have given several million dollars to help the IRA buy its guns and explosives. Much of the money is collected at jolly social evenings, dances, film shows and other events advertised in the little papers published for the Irish-American community.

The hat also goes round at meetings addressed by IRA men who have been in prison for the relatives of jailed men, and, occasionally, by fugitives.

The IRA's front organization in the US is the Irish Northern Aid Committee, known as Noraid. This week, the *Boston Globe*, which serves a city with a large Irish element, criticized the IRA and those city and state politicians who support it. *The Globe* said: "No political objective could justify random ruthlessness against the

innocent. Anyone who loves Irish should be heart sick, as most Irish people are, that its good name is invoked to justify this savagery."

It reminded readers that four Irish prime ministers had urged Americans not to give money to the IRA, and asked what people in Boston would think if a big department store there had been blown up and the Lord Mayor of London attended a fund-raising dinner for the bombers.

It went on: "The IRA has made enough widows and orphans in Ireland and Britain. It is time to bar the State House doors to murderers."

Noraid's leaders have always denied that the money they raise helps to keep the IRA in arms and ammunition, and it has never been proved in a court that Noraid has provided the guns for terrorism.

Noraid's men in New York, like its leader, Michael Flannery, and its chief spokesman, Martin Galvin, always claim that the cash goes to organizations, such as the Green

Cross in northern Ireland and ACC in the Republic, for the relief of the families of jailed IRA men.

The US Justice Department which has conducted a long investigation of Noraid's activities, say the organization is "the major American source of funds for the IRA" and that about three-quarters of the money used to support violence in Northern Ireland comes from American sources.

The US government has been trying to clamp down on Noraid, which it regards as an agent of the IRA, by forcing it to comply with the Foreign Agents Registration Act and make declarations of its membership, funding and activities. Recently the government asked a judge in New York to declare that Noraid's failure to comply was contempt of court and asked for a \$5,000-a-day fine. The case was adjourned to January, and Noraid said it looked forward to a day in court to prove that it was being "hounded" at Britain's behest.

branches across the country, some 5,000 members and perhaps 30,000 sympathizers on its fringes. It has successfully exploited the sentiment of the large Irish-American element and the widespread ignorance of the complexities and emotions of the Northern Ireland issue.

There are about 40 million Americans of Irish descent, and the Irish accent has traditionally been strong, not least in politics and the police. There is a strong sentimental notion of Ireland, and St Patrick's Day parades are popular.

One effect of the Harrods bomb outrage is likely to be a decline in support and donations for Noraid. IRA atrocities in the past have led to a falling-off in contributions, and Saturday's murders have had a considerable impact here, not only because an American died among the Christmas shoppers but also because Americans, in other parts of the world, have recently been the victims of terrorist car bombs.

Trevor Fishlock

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P.O. Box 7, 200 Gray's Inn Road, London WC1X 8EZ. Telephone: 01-837 1234

HARD POUNDING

Cabinet ministers congregate this morning for the last time in 1983, and Parliament rises for the Christmas recess this afternoon. It is six months since the election, but the political landscape seems quite different from that June day...

and his colleagues for this complacency when they see the Alliance slipping further in the polls and appearing to be less and less credible as an alternative political system? Meanwhile it is said that the Government has become accident-prone...

public and private sectors, where the Government will continue to wield the power of the state purse which it has tried absolutely without success to reduce, hoping instead that economic growth will achieve a relative reduction. Rhetorically the Prime Minister and the Chancellor still talk about reducing the scale of government...

TWO CABINETS: ONE TERRORISM

One item on the agenda of today's Cabinet meeting is the possible proscription of Sinn Fein. There is a strong a priori case for doing so, Sinn Fein is a party which openly advocates the violent overthrow of the institutions of the state...

accordance with feelings of outrage, but by reference to utility. That requires a careful appraisal of its probable effects. The Irish Cabinet met the day before yesterday with the same item on its agenda. It has not committed itself and wants further study to be made...

The discussion in Downing Street will have to concentrate on the position of Sinn Fein in Northern Ireland (although a ban, if that is what it comes to, should be for the whole United Kingdom...

POVERTY AND THE POLES

The low-key rallies held in Polish cities last Friday are not an indication of growing reconciliation between government and people; they are rather the result of a massive police presence and the constant emphasis by Solidarity leaders on the need for peaceful protest...

This is not the message of the underground Solidarity leadership, which maintains that there can be little improvement in the economy while ideology and the preservation of the political system are given higher priority than the people's welfare. Longer working hours, growing poverty, and the squandering of national resources are a result of trying to rule without popular participation...

status as a genuine representative of Polish aspirations by the mass approval which greeted the awarding of the Nobel Peace Prize, he should not be ignored. The rescheduling of Poland's debt to the West is already under discussion, but a satisfactory outcome depends on the Polish government accepting realistic terms. Humanitarian arguments and the need to support Solidarity now combine in making some relaxation of other sanctions desirable...

Just retribution for terrorism

From Mr Denis E. Meehan Sir, As an Irishman who has lived and worked in London for many years, I have often taken your proprietorship and transparency in imagination to Belfast, as horrors multiplied there. But theoretical or imaginative perception of terrorism is somewhat remote from the quiddity of it, which I experienced at Harrods, where I worked on Saturday, I can now no longer find it in me to believe that the agents of such destruction, wanton and random in its effects, are capable of redemption. Reluctantly, for I have been a lifetime opponent of capital punishment, I now believe that terrorists convicted of murder should be executed.

From Mrs Aileen Keogan Sir, As a citizen of this unfortunate country may I thank you for your compassionate editorial today (December 19). There are so many of us here who suffer, and have suffered, unbearable anguish and despair at the atrocities which are being daily perpetrated in our name. With each new horror it becomes an increasing source of shame to belong to a race which could begot creatures capable of such mind-boggling acts. Our only hope is that the British people will realize, in time, that together with our agony and sorrow for these dreadful deeds, we must carry the added burden of shame and shared responsibility.

From Mr Richard Meynell Sir, In the wake of the Harrods bombing, it may be helpful to the IRA to compare what they have in fact achieved by their actions with the declared, or self-evident, objectives. Their first objective is, by terror, to compel the British Government to accept the change in its policy. To see that they will in fact have achieved precisely the opposite effect it is only necessary for them to consider the reaction of this people to the last application of terror - Hitler's Blitz - by thugs of equivalent depravity. Their second objective is to advance the cause of Ireland, they have done the opposite; they have in fact advanced perilously close to that tragic brink where the once fair name of Ireland will, however undeservedly, become synonymous with all that is most vile.

From Mr J. Enoch Powell, MP for South (Official Unionist Party) Sir, Conary to Mrs Hanna Quinn's belief (December 20), the provisions of the Government of Ireland Act, 1920, relating to a Council of Ireland are not 'still on the statute book'. I am, Sir, yours etc. J. ENOCH POWELL, House of Commons, December 20.

Children and the Pill

From the Secretary of the British Medical Association Sir, It is tragic that those of us who have children's welfare at heart should be divided by Sir Bernard Braine's narrow arguments (December 15). We agree that in girls under the age of 16 sexual activity is medically and emotionally undesirable. We agree that where it is occurring it is highly desirable that the parents should be aware of the position so that they can offer the necessary support to the girl. It is therefore irresponsible of Sir Bernard to state that doctors are making contraceptives 'readily available' to young girls without parental consent.

From Mr Maurice Cowin Sir, I read with great interest the article written (feature, December 14) by Robert Kilroy-Silk, Labour MP for Knowsley North, on the appalling situation regarding the plight of remand prisoners. A friend of mine has been in custody, on holding charges only, since early August and has been shovelled around from police cell to police cell, from Barking to Sevenoaks, from Aylesbury to Winchester Hill. The conditions in these cells, which are no way the fault of the police, are similar to those one encounters in the darkest corners of the world than the Greater London area. It is almost impossible for his solicitor to arrange his defence due to his constant change of whereabouts, and the pressures on his family are totally unacceptable, bearing in mind that a person is innocent until proved guilty. Surely magistrates must be made more aware of this disgraceful state of affairs, and surely positive action should be taken now - and not in the near future. Yours faithfully, MAURICE COWIN, 65 Alder Lodge, River Gardens, Stone Road, SW6, December 16.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Towards a new gas industry

From Sir Kenneth Hutchison, FRS Sir, The future of the gas industry is under discussion and decisions may have been taken already behind closed doors at the ministry. Even so I trust that it is not too late to offer some suggestions for consideration about the structure of the industry when it is returned to the private sector.

I write as the one-time chairman of one of the 12 original area gas boards, each of which was an independent and self-accounting body; together with the Chairman and Deputy Chairman of the Gas Council we represented the corporate identity of the new gas industry in 1949. The supply of gas is a natural monopoly and has been recognized as such since the Metropolitan Gas Act of 1860 gave legal force to the many "districting" agreements made between the warring factions who had been laying their mains in the same London streets. With the grant of monopoly went a right of intervention by the state and an obligation on the companies to supply; nothing much was changed by the Gas Act 1948. What remained was a keen spirit of competition between the area boards, each a monopoly supplier in its own area, headed up by persons of widely different origins, united only in the belief that his was to be the best board, the most enterprising and the most viable financially. I believe that the gas industry of the future in the private sector can best be structured on the basis of 12 independent area boards, each small enough to be sensitive to the desires of its share of 15 million consumers of gas and large enough to maintain internally an efficient operational and management structure. Each area board would be free to concentrate its efforts on improvements in service to its consumers while maintaining a sound financial base from which to service the

public issues of loan stock and equity for which it would be individually responsible. There should be a supply corporation, responsible as the British Gas Corporation is now, for procuring, producing, storing, and in the long term manufacturing, gas and for maintaining the transmission system by which to deliver gas to terminals in each area board. The terms and conditions of supply and demand should be contractually enforceable. The corporation, like the area boards, would issue its own loan stock and equity and act in all respects as any other responsible oil company does except for a prior commitment to meet the area boards' demands for gas. But quis custodiet? I will propose that there be established an independent regulatory commission with powers, inter alia, to determine the maximum price of gas sold by the corporation to the area boards and by the boards to the public in their respective areas of supply. There is nothing new in this; from the early days of the gas industry right up to vesting day there have been regulations designed to control the profits of the companies supplying gas. In the USA the state legislatures exercise control by energy commissions or other means. The commission, as here proposed, would also have responsibility for authorizing the issue of loan stock, and equity when and if that becomes feasible and in the course of its duties would want to examine in depth the efficiency and performance of a board or the corporation. I do not see why anyone should object to that, if only as the price of freedom. Yours faithfully, KENNETH HUTCHISON, 2 Arlington Road, Twickenham, Middlesex, December 16.

Catching the bus

From Mr Victor Peskett Sir, You were right to highlight the plight of the people faced with the withdrawal of commercial bus services from 72 Norfolk villages (report, December 9), but perhaps too ready to follow the pessimistic forecast of the bus company's general manager. No doubt, as he is reported to have said, private operators will find it no more economic than Eastern Counties to run loss-making services. But people can help themselves, as the community buses already operating in Norfolk demonstrate.

Efficiency drive

From Mr C. H. Sisson Sir, "If the (efficiency) initiative is to survive it must push to get recommendations delivered without losing its life. The credibility barrier is establishing that good management is not optional." So wrote Ian Beesly, head of the Efficiency Unit (report, December 14). So many words to say so little! If that is the blue-eyed Under-Secretary of 1983, the only prospect for Whitehall is of less meaning on more paper. Efficiency indeed! Perhaps there was something to be said for a literate Civil Service after all. Yours faithfully, C. H. SISSON, Moorfield Cottage, The Hill, Langport, Somerset, December 14.

US-Israel peace plans

From Mr John Stebbing Sir, Your leading article of December 1 reveals very clearly the significance of the new agreement of strategic cooperation between the United States and Israel; it shows also the great importance of an effective revival of the Reagan peace Plan. Unfortunately, the first signs of a new approach to the problems of the West Bank and Gaza Strip are not promising. After his diplomatic success, Mr Shamir's perfunctory undertaking "to have another look at the Reagan peace plan" does not suggest that any strong pressure has been applied to him to secure a realistic reduction in the West Bank settlements. Unless decisive pressure is applied Mr Shamir's review is likely to be no more than a brief ritual exercise; the West Bank situation would then be unchanged and the prospects of peace for all the peoples of the region soon extinguished. This view is supported by the conclusions of the extremely competent, and quite independent, Benvenisti group of Israeli researchers in their first report (September, 1982) on the realities of the situation in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. Writing of land and land use, the group concluded that "The combination of land acquisition, closure of areas for military purposes and land use planning, roads and infrastructure development, has already ensured complete Israeli control over space in the West Bank". A large proportion of West Bank water resources have been taken over and the research group has listed 1,000 military government measures closely regulating the life of Palestinians in the two occupied territories. The 120 Israeli settlements are planned to have a rural population of 100,000 by 1987; and the West Bank Higher Planning Commission is reported by the research group to have plans for 60,000 housing units for an urban population of 320,000, in eight urban settlements in the West Bank. What appears to be needed, if a properly autonomous Palestinian administration is to be set up, is a concerted approach by all moderate Arab countries and the countries of the West to persuade the President

Our service on the Norfolk-Suffolk border is now in its fifth year of operation. Over 11,000 passengers have been carried on regular services which link 13 villages with five towns. All drivers are volunteers and unpaid, as are the organising committees. The service has also housed vehicles left during the day without transport find such a scheme invaluable, and are not slow in expressing their gratitude. Yours faithfully, VICTOR PESKETT, Administrator, Upper Waveney Valley Community Bus, Huntsman and Hounds Cottage, Metfield, Harleston, Norfolk.

Temptation to meddle

From Mr C. P. Dalton Sir, I was charmed by the picture of the refurbished platform at Charing Cross Underground station in your issue today (December 14). Waiting for the train could indeed be a pleasure in such surroundings. But why, I ask, could not London Transport have put the murals on the other side of the track? The intervention of the electrified line might have at least deterred the many amateur artists who through the Underground these days from adding the elements that Botticelli was careful to leave to the imagination. Yours faithfully, C. P. DALTON, Coppice, Kibbings Lane, Storrington, West Sussex, December 14.

Middle East auspices

From Dr. H. R. McKinlay Sir, The white stork (Ciconia ciconia) has just completed its autumn migration south through the north Bekaa Valley, oblivious of terrorist distractions. Though Meinertzhagen says that their main route is east of the Anti-Lebanon mountains, flocks of 500 to 2,000 birds flew in at an altitude of 200 metres from the direction of the Lac de Homs, beginning on August 31. Flying two kilometres east of Hermit they then circled in a clockwise spiral to 1,000 metres near the Hermit pyramid (Qanawat et Hermit), a tomb of a Syrian prince dating from the first century BC. South of El Ain they circled again before crossing the Anti-Lebanon mountains. Flocks passed on this route on August 31, September 1, October 5, 12, 20 and finally on October 31, generally between 8.30 and 9.30am. Their only concession to current events is that for the past two years they have not flown over Baalbek. Yours faithfully, H. R. MCKINLAY, Hermit, Bekaa Valley, Lebanon, November 28.

Financial solution

From Mr Giorgio Francesconi Sir, Far from being an unwelcome development, a British decision to withhold payment to the EEC (your leader, December 16) might help find a final solution to the permanent crisis of the last few years. The UK would be in breach of EEC laws and, if a stalemate followed, as is likely, the outcome could well be the end of the present Community. This would allow the countries which believe in European principles to form another Community, with which Britain could negotiate a treaty of association. Yours faithfully, GIORGIO FRANCESCONI, 283 Westbourne Park Road, W11.

FINANCE AND INDUSTRY

Executive Editor Kenneth Fleet

Why Merrill Lynch is thundering after Wedd

Earlier this month America's biggest investment brokers, Merrill Lynch...

which time shares sold have to be supplied and those bought paid for. Most brokers...

Pastor said that National Westminster, Lloyds Bank or Manufacturers & Traders...

Memo sent

It was not until October that Merrill discovered that Pastor had been trading through Wedd, Durlacher...

Mr Rochester also asks whether Pastor had hot money and was laundering it at arm's length from the IRS...

At about the same time, between August 24 and September 19, Pastor had commissioned Wedd Durlacher to buy through other leading Wall Street brokers...

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The shares, in Getty Oil, Motorola and National Semi Conductor (NSM), rose sharply in price leaving Pastor with an open commitment to the American brokers...

The documents trace the operations of Pastor Securities, which have left Wall Street and European institutions with debts well in excess of \$25m (£17.7m).

Pastor Securities, an American subsidiary of a Spanish company owned by Peruvians, sold 1.7 million "blue chip" shares it did not own on Wall Street in the expectation that they would fall in price...

The shares, in Getty Oil, Motorola and National Semi Conductor (NSM), rose sharply in price leaving Pastor with an open commitment to the American brokers...

Accounts opened

Merrill Lynch is claiming that the president of Wedd's US operations, Mr David Rochester, formerly with Cazenove and now an employee of Merrill, was doubtful about Mr Pastor's bona fides last June...

Wedd strenuously denies the allegation which is basically centered on the evidence afforded by Mr Rochester. The English firm is seeking to have Merrill's case dismissed for being technically incorrect in presentation and because Wedd claims that at no time did it have knowledge that would cause it to suspect the nature of Mr Pastor's stock market trading activities.

The story really began last spring. Mr Pastor opened accounts with both Merrill Lynch and Wedd, Durlacher. He then claimed to be a portfolio manager for wealthy European and South American families and an executor of "block" share transactions for major European and South American banks.

From that time until August Mr Pastor's market activities were cloaked by his having major firms deal against each other. In some instances, Merrill claims, he was buying and selling the same shares simultaneously.

The New York Stock Exchange has a five-day account period, at the end of

Middle East buyers foiled in Kleinwort Benson raid

By Peter Wilson-Smith, Banking Correspondent

An attempt by unknown Middle East investors to build up a 10 per cent stake in Kleinwort, Benson, Lonsdale, holding company for one of the City's top merchant banks, fuelled speculation yesterday over the next big development in the financial markets.

Messel & Co, the stockbroker firm, moved into the market yesterday morning offering up to 395p for shares in Kleinwort, Benson, 25p above the previous night's closing price.

The shares closed up 56p at 423p, valuing the bank at £229m. Messel was acting for TWB Investment, a company registered in Netherlands Antilles with a wholly-owned

London subsidiary which manages portfolios for private clients in the Middle East. TWB said yesterday that it owned 2.62 million shares or 5.2 per cent of Kleinwort, Benson but denied that the stake was anything more than an investment.

Mr Philip Watson, a shareholder in TWB said the stake in Kleinwort, Benson had been bought on behalf of a couple of Middle East clients resident in the Gulf who were also shareholders in TWB.

He said the clients wanted an investment in a top quality merchant bank and they had known Kleinwort, Benson for some time. He said there was no intention to make a bid.

Asked whether they would be buying more shares, Mr Watson said: "I have no idea, that depends on my clients. I should think the approach would be

to let the dust settle and see what happens." At Kleinwort, Benson, Lord Rockley, a director of the merchant bank, took a relaxed view. "We know the people who are behind the purchase of the shares. They are longstanding banking customers", he said.

Lord Rockley said he believed the stake was simply an investment and was not worried about the possibility of a bid. "We are satisfied with their respectability," he added.

He would not be drawn on the bank's plans to cope with the shake-up in the City and financial markets. "We've formulated a lot of ideas and we've never publicly aired them. We just have to see how and when they get implemented," Lord Rockley said.

Kleinwort, Benson's disclosed profits have slipped from £22.9m in 1980 to £20.0m last

year and are likely to be lower again in 1983.

The Bank of England takes a close interest in ownership of merchant banks and in 1972 it issued a notice in effect saying that its permission was required before foreign companies bought more than 15 per cent in a merchant bank.

"It is understood that banks will consult the Bank on all proposals for participations exceeding 15 per cent as early as possible and before any formal negotiations is undertaken; and that they will accept the Bank's ruling in each case and take no irrevocable steps in the meantime," the notice said.

Although the Bank might take a more relaxed view in the present climate, it is unlikely that would sanction a contested takeover of a merchant bank.

Panelsets deadline on bid for Eagle Star

By Our Financial Staff

The City Takeover Panel yesterday set a deadline of 4.30pm on December 30 for the final bidding in Britain's biggest ever takeover battle for Eagle Star Holdings.

The deadline was imposed after a full meeting of the 13-member panel, chaired by Mr Martin Jacob, vice-chairman of Kleinwort Benson.

Mr John Hignett, director general of the panel, had called the meeting in a bid to resolve problems caused by the competing bids from the West German insurer, Allianz Versicherungs, and BAT Industries.

The panel was forced to announce the deadline and an amendment to its rules because of the unique nature of the bidding. The problems have been caused because the rival bidders have remained in the battle for Eagle Star for so long.

BAT Industries has the highest offer on the table with a 675p per share cash offer valuing Eagle Star at £934m. Allianz has offered 66p per share, which is worth £920m.

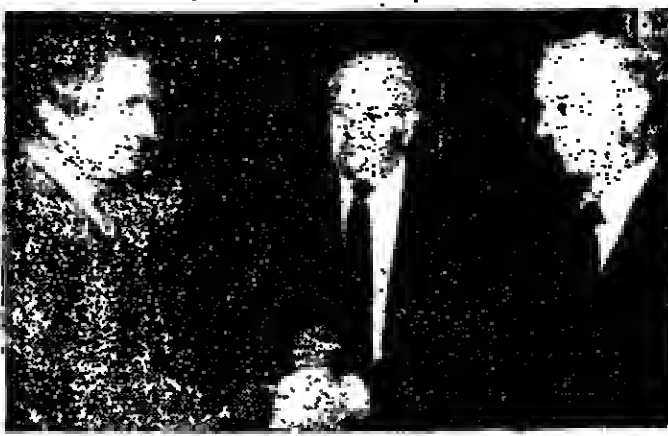
Under takeover rules, a bidder is not allowed to revise a takeover offer after the forty-sixth day after posting the last of two competing offers.

However, the panel has amended its rules so that each of the bidders is able to announce details of its final offer on the forty-sixth day (December 30) rather than posting them to shareholders that day.

The panel will police the bids by insisting that it should be given details of any offer at least 30 minutes before they are released to the Stock Exchange. The final date for posting the offer details will be deferred until January 4.

The panel said yesterday that no further exceptional provisions would be over the bid unless more exceptional circumstances arose.

On the stock market, Eagle Star shares rose by 7p to 729p, as dealers anticipated a fresh spate of bidding for Eagle Star. Shares of BAT Industries, which welcomed the decision to resolve the uncertainty surrounding the timing of the bidding, were unchanged at 128p.



US - Italian agreement: Carlo de Benedetti, Olivetti chairman (left), with Charles Brown, A T & T chairman (right) and James Olson, A T & T vice-chairman, after announcing their deal in Rome yesterday.

A T & T takes 25% stake in Olivetti

From John Earle, Rome

American Telephone and Telegraph is to take a 25 per cent share in Olivetti, Italy's data processing company, through a \$250m (£183m) issue of Olivetti shares under a wide-ranging industrial and commercial agreement between the two groups.

Signor Carlo de Benedetti, Olivetti's chairman, said in Rome yesterday that the deal was "the biggest minority investment ever made by an American company outside the United States".

The two groups will distribute each other's products in their respective markets. Olivetti will supply A T & T, over a 12-month period from mid-1984, with a new Olivetti-designed product - about which no details were given - to an

approximate value of \$250m. The agreement also provides for joint development of AT & T's participation is being arranged through the issue of 100 million new shares. Signor de Benedetti has thus respected assurances, given to the French Government, that shares released by the recent reduction in French holdings (from the 33 per cent stake of Saint Gobain and Bull to the 10 per cent held by CIT-Alcatel) would not pass into American ownership.

Control of Olivetti will remain in the hands of an Italian-controlled shareholders' syndicate.

The Americans have undertaken to increase their investment in Olivetti for four years.

US expects 4.5% growth

From Bailey Morris, Washington

The American economy is expected to grow at an annual rate of 4.5 per cent in the final quarter of the year, continuing its year-long recovery from the most severe recession since the 1930's, the Commerce Department reported yesterday.

Release of the department's preliminary "flash estimates" of the fourth-quarter gross national product marked a day of extremely good economic

news for President Reagan, who predicted at his year-end news conference on Tuesday that 1983 would turn out to be a banner year for Americans.

Although the projected figures are sharply lower than the third-quarter growth of 7.6 per cent, they none-the-less represent healthy growth, especially when coupled with the Government's new inflation figures, also released yesterday.

Polly Peck to raise £5m

By Michael Clark

Polly Peck, the international trading group headed by Mr Asif Ali, announced plans to raise £5m to finance its expansion programme.

Mr Nadir plans to raise the money by placing shares, about 3 per cent of the equity, with unnamed Middle East associates who have agreed to take them up.

Shareholders are to receive a scrip issue on the basis of nine-for-one to encourage demand for the shares.

The proposals require the consent of shareholders at the annual meeting on January 12. Mr Nadir said the placing of the shares - the maximum allowed - removed the expense of a rights issue.

News of the placing clipped 50p from the price at £27 1/2.

Profit leap at Lloyds & Scottish

By Our Banking Correspondent

Lloyds & Scottish, the finance house controlled by Lloyds Bank with a minority shareholder, reported a big recovery in profits yesterday.

Despite substantially higher bad debt provisions, pretax profits jumped from £12.3m to £22.4m in the year to September 30 and the annual dividend is unchanged at 3.87p net a share.

A change in accounting policy for regional development grants on leased assets has boosted profits by £2.3m and the previous year has been restated upwards by £1.6m but Lloyds & Scottish is falling in line with the generally accepted practice.

Lloyds Bank has long wanted to buy out Royal Bank's 39.3 minority stake in the finance house, but has been unable to reach agreement on price. However, on Tuesday Lloyds raised its stake in Royal Bank to 21.3 per cent to strengthen its bargaining position to gain the rest of Lloyds & Scottish.

Lloyds & Scottish is one of Britain's biggest finance houses and is particularly strong in hire purchase. It has been helped by lower interest rates, which averaged 1.6 percentage points less during 1982-83.

The previous year profits were depressed by heavy financing costs of two acquisitions, Bowmaker and Hamilton Leasing. But a £70.5m rights issue this year helped to reduce that burden.

The group's gross assets rose by about a quarter from £2.09 billion to £2.56 billion with much of the growth coming from the consumer side. However, bad debts, up on both the consumer and corporate side, are believed to have risen by more than half.

Index at 772 peak

The FT Index surged through the important 770 mark yesterday, helped by renewed selective support for leading equities. It closed the day 2.2 points up at an all-time high of 772.0.

Big speculation produced good gains among the merchant banks and discount houses, where Kleinwort Benson was the subject of an abortive dawn raid. The shares ended the day 56p higher at 423p.

A firmer pound also provided late support for gilts, which, having been unchanged most of the day, closed with rises of about 25p. On the foreign exchanges the pound gained 30 points to close at \$1.4225.

Market report, page 15

STOCK EXCHANGES

Table with columns for FT Index, FT All Shares, Barclays, Daimler, etc. and values for various indices and stock prices.

CURRENCIES

Table with columns for LONDON CLOSE, Sterling, DM, etc. and values for various currencies.

INTEREST RATES

Table with columns for Domestic rates, Bank base rates, etc. and values for various interest rates.

GOLD

Table with columns for London fixed (per ounce), etc. and values for gold prices.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Retail boom 'to continue into spring'

Britain's retail boom is set to continue at least until next spring according to the results of the latest survey of the distributive trades by the Confederation of British Industry.

The survey, published today, shows there was a widespread increase in sales in November compared with a year earlier. The rise was most marked among retailers, with a smaller increase noted by wholesalers.

A balance of 33 per cent of distributors are optimistic about business conditions over the next three months again with retailers heading the list.

Blue Chip share prices forged ahead to early trading on the New York Exchange with the Dow Jones industrial average rising 7.5 points to 1249. Volume was about 18 million shares in the first 45 minutes of trading.

Fisdec, a new venture capital business set up by Exco International and British and Commonwealth Shipping has invested much of its initial £6m of finance in four companies. Fisdec specializes in financial and information services and technology.

BSC in £2.4m merger with two producers

By Edward Townsend, Industrial Correspondent

Britain's three main producers of ferrous rolled rings, used mostly for railway wheel tyres, have agreed to a £2.4m compensation plan for the rationalisation of the sector under a scheme that will lead to the privatization of another of the British Steel Corporation's activities.

The BSC and the two private companies, Woodhouse and Rixco (Holdings), have agreed outline terms for the combining of their businesses into a new

company to be called United Ring. Lazard Brothers, the merchant bank which put together the proposals, will acquire 12.5 per cent of United Ring shares when the deal is completed, leaving the BSC with 75 per cent of the new company worth about £10.5m.

The scheme has been drawn up in response to the continued excess capacity in Britain for ferrous rings, which also have applications in turbines and bearing cages.

BL yesterday sold its Aveling Barford construction equipment subsidiary, which employs 1,100 people at Grantham, Lincolnshire, to Mr Adrien Eschallier, an American entrepreneur.

The car group decided to reveal the price it received for the loss-making business, but indicated that the deal brings to £80m the proceeds from the sale of businesses since its recovery programme was launched in 1981.

Mr Eschallier, a former head of Gulf & Western's mining and resources division and a lawyer, is now chairman of Aveling. He said yesterday that among the priorities would be an expansion of overseas sales.

Mr Brian Hoare, the former

Proceeds from sales of offshoots reaches £80m

By Andrew Cornelius

BL yesterday sold its Aveling Barford construction equipment subsidiary, which employs 1,100 people at Grantham, Lincolnshire, to Mr Adrien Eschallier, an American entrepreneur.

The deal marks a milestone in BL's recovery programme by completing the sale of its peripheral activities.

BL's sales of Alvis, Prestcold, Coventry Climax and other businesses previously raised £53m, which indicates a price-tag of about £25m for Aveling.

The group has shed a subsidiary which has been losing money for the past four years.

The market for Aveling's dumper trucks, road rollers and grading equipment has declined sharply although losses have been cut in recent years.

Within the past 12 months

the world market for this type of equipment has fallen by 20 per cent as orders have fallen from the construction and mining industries.

The fall in demand has been accompanied by a cut of 400 in the Aveling workforce and increasing emphasis on export sales, which now account for two-thirds of the company's £33m annual turnover.

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Lloyds & Scottish, the finance house controlled by Lloyds Bank with a minority shareholder, reported a big recovery in profits yesterday.

Despite substantially higher bad debt provisions, pretax profits jumped from £12.3m to £22.4m in the year to September 30 and the annual dividend is unchanged at 3.87p net a share.

A change in accounting policy for regional development grants on leased assets has boosted profits by £2.3m and the previous year has been restated upwards by £1.6m but Lloyds & Scottish is falling in line with the generally accepted practice.

Lloyds Bank has long wanted to buy out Royal Bank's 39.3 minority stake in the finance house, but has been unable to reach agreement on price. However, on Tuesday Lloyds raised its stake in Royal Bank to 21.3 per cent to strengthen its bargaining position to gain the rest of Lloyds & Scottish.

Lloyds & Scottish is one of Britain's biggest finance houses and is particularly strong in hire purchase. It has been helped by lower interest rates, which averaged 1.6 percentage points less during 1982-83.

The previous year profits were depressed by heavy financing costs of two acquisitions, Bowmaker and Hamilton Leasing. But a £70.5m rights issue this year helped to reduce that burden.

The group's gross assets rose by about a quarter from £2.09 billion to £2.56 billion with much of the growth coming from the consumer side. However, bad debts, up on both the consumer and corporate side, are believed to have risen by more than half.

F.M.C. plc and Subsidiary Companies

GROUP UNAUDITED RESULTS for the 24 weeks ended 15th October, 1983

Table with columns for 24 weeks ended 15th Oct 1983, 24 weeks ended 16th Oct 1982, and values for Sales to third parties, Total turnover, Group trading profit, etc.

Commenting on the results for the twenty-four weeks ended 15th October, 1983, the Chairman, Mr A. P. Humphries, said: "Despite losses of approximately £400,000 incurred by the two Irish meat plants up to the date of their disposal in this period, and extremely difficult trading conditions in the summer of 1983, group trading profits have been maintained. All trading divisions in Great Britain showed improved results. A substantial reduction in interest charges arising from lower borrowings and lower interest rates helped the group to produce a profit before tax of £104,000, an improvement of £520,000 on last year. Extraordinary items include a provision for rationalisation and reorganisation."

The financial year-end is being changed to 31st December, 1983, to coincide with the year-end of the new parent company, Hilldown Holdings Limited. The Board of F.M.C. plc does not propose to recommend a dividend on the ordinary shares in respect of the current accounting reference period.

F.M.C. plc 19-23 Knightsbridge, London SW1X 7NF

Women are given a big lift out of the rough by sponsors

Britain's women professionals will be playing for almost £400,000 next season - a large increase on the 1983 figure. Even more important, the standard of play should rise considerably as there will be 15 four-round stroke-play tournaments next year compared with only one last season.

The prize money has been increased through Hitachi sponsoring a revival of the British Women's Open with a purse of £140,000 at Woburn next October. But the PGA have virtually doubled other prizes, an excellent achievement considering that the women's circuit was in dire straits when they took over a year ago.

The circuit starts with the Ford Classic at Woburn in May and will go on until the middle of October. It also features a revival of the match-play championship, one Continental event - the Swedish open - and 16 pro-am tournaments.

Colin Snape, executive director of the women's PGA, said: "The tremendous increase in prize money in such a short period reflects the growing interest in women's golf throughout Europe. With more competition, the WPGA will continue to expand." Dates and venues:

- MAY 2-5: Ford Classic, Woburn (£20,000); 17-20: Clonaboy Classic, Clonaboy (£10,000); JUNE 3: McEwan's Lager Manchester Classic, Heaton Park (£10,000).
- JUNE 6-8: British Open, Old Tom's (£10,000); 13-16: United Friends Tournament, Hill Barn (£10,000); 20-22: UEM Classic, Farnborough (£10,000); 23-25: Jersey Open, Royal Jersey (£10,000); 28-30: Jersey Open, Royal Jersey (£10,000).
- JULY 12-14: Caldey Classic, Caldey (£7,500); 25-28: J S Law Eastleigh Classic, Fleming Park (£10,000).
- AUGUST 2-5: Urdun Friendly Tournament, Southport and Anfield (£12,500); 7-10: White Horse Whisky Challenge, Burnham Beeches (£10,000); 14-17: Colman Jersey Open, Royal Jersey (£10,000); 23-25: Swedish Open, Molls (£17,500).
- SEPTEMBER 12-14: Lorn Stewart Match Play Championship, Sudbury (£10,000); 24-27: Sands International, Sandown Sands (£10,000).
- OCTOBER 3-5: Hitachi British Women's Open, Woburn (£140,000); 10-12: Smiffoli Irish Open, venue to be announced (£10,000).

BOXING: FORMER CHAMPION'S COMEBACK GOES FORWARD

Hearns wants Leonard rematch

Washington (AP) - Sugar Ray Leonard's first bout in his comeback after a two year lay-off will be against an American welterweight, Kevin Howard, on February 25, according to a WDVN-TV report here.

The television station says that Leonard will face Howard, who is ranked eighth in the world, on February 25. The revenue has yet to be decided.

Leonard, the former undisputed world welterweight champion, aged 27, was forced to retire after an operation to repair a detached retina. His doctors have assured him that his eye is now completely healed.

Providing that Leonard comes through his warm-up bout successfully, a rematch against the World Boxing Council (WBC) super welterweight champion, Thomas Hearns, looks likely. But, if the bout against Hearns does take place, Leonard wants to wear gloves to further damage to his eye. Whether Leonard would also want to use thumbless gloves against Howard is not known.

Hearns has himself recovered from an injury - to his right hand and is anxious for another bout against Leonard who is the only man ever to beat him. Hearns attended a press conference in New York on Tuesday, to promote his first title defence - over 12 rounds against Mike McCall of Italy. "I want Leonard," he said. "It is not hard to see why since Hearns is cocked and ready to fight. It would be worth \$20m."

But first, Hearns will have to beat Minichillo, the former European junior middleweight champion, aged 28, who has a record of 42 wins and two defeats. The venue of the bout, which is scheduled for January 27, has not been announced but it is likely to be in Las Vegas.



Leonard: doctors say his eye is completely healed

that his feared right hand is now fully operational. Hearns injured his hand when winning the world title a year ago. He achieved a points decision over the Puerto Rican Wilfredo Benitez, despite having to box the final rounds with two dislocated bones.

But Hearns, aged 25, says he is no longer worried by his hand. Neither is he worried about Minichillo. "I don't know anything about Minichillo, but I'm prepared for him a certain way and he came out a different way I could be a trouble."

Hearns, of course, knows Leonard all too well. He believes Leonard can make a successful comeback despite the length of his lay-off and he still respects Leonard's skill. However, Hearns will also have to prove

very interested in everything I told him and the last thing he said to me was, 'I'd like nothing better than to fight in the Garden again.'"

If Coodon's proposal is accepted, Holmes would be joining the WBA's top five challengers in Madison Square Garden. The last time Holmes, who is 34, boxed in the Garden was June 22, 1979, when he stopped Mike Weaver in the 12th round of a title match.

A contest between Holmes and Cortez, became a possibility when Holmes was named yesterday among the challengers in his December rankings. Gualdo Rivera, the WBA ranking committee's chairman, said Holmes had specifically asked to be included in the WBA rankings.

How Norwich round up prize scalps like Christmas turkeys

It is not every season that you can say "Yippies, I'm off to see Coventry play Norwich," but it was a fixture with something close to Match of the Day status on Saturday. And if the two clubs did only succeed in cancelling each other out in a match showing more bustle than the most *outré* Edwardian lady of fashion, the fact remains that both clubs are still serious contenders for one of those treasured places in Europe after that 0-0 draw.

The Coventry amalgam of incongruous elements mixed into a harmonious whole is one of the surprises of the season. What is surprising about Norwich is not their healthy place in the first division (seventh before Saturday's match) but the fact that they are in the first division at all.

Norwich are the top division's perennial underdogs. Football is a big city game. Norwich is a country town with a big cathedral. At this time of year Norfolk is a place more readily associated with increasingly nervous turkeys than with increasingly confident footballers.

But it seems that never a season goes by without the collection of a few prized scalps for the Chingchogs of Carrow Road. If Watford amazed last season, and Coventry continue to amaze this, Norwich manage to find an amazing Saturday or three every season. True, they spent much of last season walking to catch the relegation dogcatcher and only jumped clear at the moment he swung his net, but they also did the double over Liverpool. At Norwich surprises are part of the routine.

The theory used to be that it was the genius of the former management John Bond, and his talent for spreading not much Marmite on an awful lot of toast, that allowed Norwich to cling on to their improbable position in the first division. When Bond upped and went to Manchester City in October 1980, leaving Ken Brown, his No 2 in charge, it seemed unlikely that the usual seasonal miracle of staying up could ever be worked again.

"I've got a different approach to John Bond," Brown said. "He can be very, very demanding of players and very frightening. I prefer to let players take responsibility for themselves, to enjoy themselves in a responsible, not a sloppy, kind of way. John was the kind of man who used to take the worries of management home with him every Sunday. I vowed I would never do that. But beyond that there were no special problems in taking over. I had always worked closely with John and know as much about the players as he did."

However, Brown's first trick as manager was to drop through the trapdoor to the second division, where you would expect the club to be by rights. But next season they were back up again. "It was a real nail-biter, that last match in our promotion season. We needed a draw at Sheffield Wednesday, but they scored a winner in injury time. Then the result from Leicester came through, and we were up anyway."

Brown's dealings on the transfer market mostly spring from the sale of Justin Fashanu to Nottingham Forest for £1m; the days of million-pound

transfers seem so remote these days that we might be talking of transfer fees for Achilles and Hector. Fashanu provided rash for three £200,000 signings for Chris Woods, the goalkeeper John Deehan and Keith Bevis.

"We are a small club with a small squad of players, but I'm lucky with players who function in different positions," Brown says. "We have strength in depth through versatility and there are virtues in smallness with a closer-knit group of players. We operate a maximum wage here, too, 100,000. I don't like it but players who don't like it can go."

Being a football manager expressed no surprise whatsoever in finding his team in 50 unexpected places in the league after their successive victories and one defeat in 17 games. "I started with the last dozen or so games last season when we got ourselves out of the mire at the beginning of the season. You can check this - that we had the ability to win a place in Europe. I don't make predictions, but I still think we're good enough."

As the jumble of super league continues, it is pleasant to be reminded of the most enjoyable elements in English football, not just in cup competitions, but in the League, where at least you have such inter-city rivalries as Manchester City, Chelsea and Sheffield Wednesday trying to break out of the Norwich bumpy while the last Olympic Congress was held in their just seven points behind Liverpool.

Simon Barnes

BOOK REVIEWS

Dreams to sustain us through the dark days

By Conrad Voss Bark

Around this time of the year fishermen ought to be tying flies, varnishing their rods and reading edifying books. There are several kinds of edifying books but those I am thinking of are those you take to bed because they will create dreams of what must be done at all costs in the coming year. An expedition to the Highlands. A new and toffish fly? A new method of fishing? Perhaps none is likely to happen, but the thought will keep us going through dark days.

The new guide books are of that category evocative of a place, of moods and feelings, as well as being instructive. In a Michelin style a whole chapter will be devoted to one river, or even a pool in one river, with advice on flies and tackle and where and how to finish it, provoking an appetite as well as satisfying one's curiosity about far-distant places.

Three admirable books of this kind have been produced this year, two are anthologies

one edited by David Barr, a peripatetic East Anglian, the other by my wife, and the third invaluable guide is by John Ashley-Cooper. *A Salmon Fisher's Odyssey* (Witherby £14.50), *West Country Fly Fishing* (Batsford, £9.95) are all good Christmas reading, except that the Harg guide is poor on lakes.

Four fishing classics have been republished by Andre Waller Hills's *A Summer on the Test*, Plunkett Greene's *Where The Bright Waters Meet*, Chaytor's *Letters To a Salmon* and C. F. Tunnicliffe's *Clive Holloway's Lake Flies and Their Imitation*.

Fly fishermen are also poets. There is Ted Hughes's superb poem about the sea trout in *River* (Faber and Faber, £10), with photographs by Peter Keen. They are also artists; and Ian Niall catches the pure beauty of the loe and form of C. F. Tunnicliffe in *Tunnicliffe's Countryside* (Clive Holloway Books, £16.95).

Holmes receives £16½m offer

New York (Agencies) Larry Holmes, who resigned his World Boxing Council heavyweight title last week, has been offered an estimated £16½m (\$25m) to meet the South African, Gerrie Coetzee, the World Boxing Association champion, in New York.

The deal was disclosed yesterday by John Coodon, the boxing president of Madison Square Garden, where the contest would be held. He said: "We'd put the fight on and take just 60 per cent of the gate. All the rest, 40 per cent live and all the ancillaries would go to Holmes. We've figured Larry could come out with \$25 million."

very interested in everything I told him and the last thing he said to me was, 'I'd like nothing better than to fight in the Garden again.'"

If Coodon's proposal is accepted, Holmes would be joining the WBA's top five challengers in Madison Square Garden. The last time Holmes, who is 34, boxed in the Garden was June 22, 1979, when he stopped Mike Weaver in the 12th round of a title match.

A contest between Holmes and Cortez, became a possibility when Holmes was named yesterday among the challengers in his December rankings. Gualdo Rivera, the WBA ranking committee's chairman, said Holmes had specifically asked to be included in the WBA rankings.

unbeaten in 45 bouts, gave up his WBC title because he refused to meet his organisation's official challenger, fellow American Bruce Page.

Holmes said he was joining the newly-formed International Boxing Federation, which is attempting to become a third world governing body for the sport.

Koopmans defends Paris (AP) - The Dutch European heavyweight champion, Rudy Koopmans, will defend his title on January 12 in Marseille against the French champion, Richard Caramon-

McKeever turns his back on Bolton

Rod McKeever, of Bolton, one of the top scorers in basketball's National League walked out on the club yesterday and returned to New Jersey. The American, who has been awarded 27 points a game, decided he did not want to be with a losing team.

Bolton have not won a match this season and their promoter, Keith Knight, said: "It will be difficult finding a replacement at this stage of the season to save off relegation."

TENNIS: Jo Durie, Britain's No 1 women player, is planning to rest for a month after a successful year in which she has risen 16 places in the computer world rankings to eighth. Miss Durie is optimistic that the next list will put her at No 6.

IN BRIEF

McKeever turns his back on Bolton

Richard Whitchello, of Kent, is the top seed for the club boys' championship, sponsored by First Division, at Queen's Club, London, from January 2 to 7. Seeded to meet Whitchello in the final is his doubles partner, Ben Knapp, of Gloucestershire. Sarah Longbottom, of Yorkshire, is No 1 seed for the girls' event.

David de Miguel, of Spain, eliminated John McEnroe's young brother, Patrick, 6-1, 6-2 in the second round of the Orange Bowl under-18 tournament in Miami on Tuesday. McEnroe, a semi-finalist at the Wimbledon junior championships earlier this year, was the third seed.

Ted Dexter, the former England cricket captain, faces a difficult start to his defence of the

President's Putter at Rye near M. He has been drawn against Alex Aldrich-Blake, the best finalist in 1980, in the first round of the tournament, which is organized by the Oxford and Cambridge Golfing Society.

OLYMPIC GAMES: The Japanese Olympic Committee want to stage the 1990 Olympic Congress in Tokyo.

TABLE TENNIS - The Association of Table Tennis in Europe is proposing a championship involving European and Asian countries. From European and Asian countries, Union's executive committee, meeting in Bahrain during the first Asian junior championships, decided to approach European authorities with its proposal.

Company Name	High	Low	High	Low	High	Low	High	Low	High	Low	High	Low	High	Low	High	Low	High	Low	High	Low
Authorized Unit Trusts	10.50	10.40	10.60	10.50	10.70	10.60	10.80	10.70	10.90	10.80	11.00	10.90	11.10	11.00	11.20	11.10	11.30	11.20	11.40	11.30
Authorized Units & Insurance Funds	11.50	11.40	11.60	11.50	11.70	11.60	11.80	11.70	11.90	11.80	12.00	11.90	12.10	12.00	12.20	12.10	12.30	12.20	12.40	12.30
Insurance	12.50	12.40	12.60	12.50	12.70	12.60	12.80	12.70	12.90	12.80	13.00	12.90	13.10	13.00	13.20	13.10	13.30	13.20	13.40	13.30

RUGBY UNION: WELSH CONTINUE CONTROVERSY OVER BANNED PLAYERS

Wales may still choose Perkins

John Perkins, the Pontypool lock forward who established himself in Wales's team last season, has been left out of the 34-man squad announced yesterday by WRU for their opening Five Nations match against Scotland in Cardiff on January 21.

Perkins will however be considered by Wales once he finishes a one-month ban after being sent off in a recent club match, the chairman of selectors Rod Morgan stated.

Jeff Whiteford, the uncapped Cardiff prop widely expected to make his international debut this season, has also been left out of the squad after being sent off during last Saturday's Welsh Cup match against Treorchy.

The uncapped locks, Chris Booker (Cross Keys) and David

Waters (Newport), have been preferred to Perkins, as has the British Lion, Robert Norster, even though he has been out of first-class rugby for more than six months since injuring his back in New Zealand during the summer.

Newport's Mike Watkins, is back in favour after proving an inspired captain for Wales B. He could strongly challenge Aberavon's Billy James for the booker's position and Eddie Butler for the captaincy.

There is still no place in the selectors' calculations for the former Wales captain and Lions stand-off half, Gareth Davies, who is only 27 and enjoying a vintage season with Cardiff.

WELSH SQUAD: Full backs: H Davies (Bridgend), M Wyatt (Swansea), G Evans (Maesteg), Three-quarters: R Asherham (Llanelli), L Jones (Dorowen South Wales Police), A Hodge (Cardiff), K

Hopkins (South Glamorgan Institute), C Rees (London Welsh), E Rees (Neath), O Richards (Swansea), M Riny (Cardiff), M Tudor (Bridgend), Half backs: B Owen (South Wales Police), R Doolan (Swansea), G John (South Glamorgan Institute), D Bishop (Pontypool), M Douglas (Llanelli), R Gies (Aberavon), Forwards: C Booker (Cross Keys), E J Butler (Pontypool), A Davies (Llanelli), M Davies (Swansea), I Edman (Cardiff), M James (Aberavon), S Jones (Pontypool), R Morgan (Newport), R Morley (Swansea), R Norster (Cardiff), O Picketing (Llanelli), G Roberts (Swansea), T Shaw (Newbridge), I Stephens (Bridgend), D Waters (Newport), M Watkins (Newport).

If there is one area where the four home unions should appear unanimous it is in discipline on the field, David Hands, Rugby Correspondent, writes. There have been several instances in the last few seasons of long-term injuries to players after Anglo-Welsh club matches and though England have maintained a policy of oot

picking players for international sides if they have been sent off during the same season, Wales have not followed the same line. It seems particularly unfortunate that they should not have chosen to do so once more in the light of recent publicity given to incidents in the match between Moseley and Swansea. Even if it means the loss of players of international calibre for a season, players should be aware of the possible loss of status which may result from a dismissal. There is no change, however, where Gareth Davies is concerned, and it is equally difficult for "outsiders" to believe that Wales have three stand off halves all better than the Cardiff player Gareth Davies, who must now be feeling that his days as an international player are over.



Over to you: Glenn manages to get the ball away to the No 14, White, despite the close attentions of Mdawarima and Kayembe at Old Deer Park. (Photograph: Ian Stewart).

Zimbabwe Schools break even on tour

By David Hands London Schools.....3 Zimbabwe Schools.....17 The Zimbabwe national schools side has trodden in the footsteps of the senior side which toured England in September, but with considerably more success. They therefore offer considerable optimism for their country's rugby future after concluding their tour at Old Deer Park yesterday, where they beat London by a goal, two tries and a penalty goal to a penalty and by doing so broke even for their visit.

Scottish Youth before the third win at the home of London Welsh, a pleasant homecoming for their Welsh-born manager, Tom Reakes. Zimbabwe have many of the virtues and faults of their seniors. They like to run the ball, but, under pressure, they concede too many penalties. It was London's misfortune that they could take little advantage of possession won here and from the set pieces though again it was very much a scratch side which met for the first time only yesterday morning.

two coloured players in the side, at the front to good effect. London had a heavier pack and did well in the set scrums, taking three heels against the head and picking up another ball as it squirted from the side of a retreating Zimbabwe scrum. But their midfield could create little, there seemed too much dependence on the incursions from full back of Hobbs, the captain, and too little time given to working space for a pair of useful wings.

year's 16-group stand off, recovered a penalty before the interval but tries by Bailey and Watson from some splendid fluent back play emphasized Zimbabwe's superiority. The dependable Pohl, a full back who kicked off both feet and came into his line well, added a conversion and a penalty. SCOTLAND: London - Penalty: Roberts; Zimbabwe - Tries: Jacobz, Bailey, Watson, Conversions: Pohl, Penalty: Pohl. LONDON SCHOOLS: A Hobbs (Cranghill, captain), D Toombs (Dubwili), K White (Haberghadergh), A S's, E's, A Roberts (Wycombe College), S Glenn (Great Cornard Upper), T Willis (Wellington College), F Morley (Socleing College), J Chaffield (Catharine A Golding (Vyners), C Jennings (Kingsbury HS), M Upex (Netherhall), D Spink (Wellington College), A Kemp (St Paul's). ZIMBABWE SCHOOLS: M Pohl, Watson, J Jacobs, G Vrijoux, V Mdawarima, D Curtis (captain), S Morgan, C Harley, G Zamuko, M Bailey, T Kazembe, K Butler, J Park, S Hyde, D Smith.

Glasgow McGuinness Minister warns Welsh

Glasgow have made only one change in the side to meet their Scotland at Hawick on Saturday from that which had a surprisingly win over Edinburgh at Highbury almost a fortnight ago. Gerry McGuinness, West of Scotland, Glasgow must win to share the title with South, the district champions. The Borders have won the title outright 12 times and Glasgow only twice. The odds, already heavily in South's favour, have become even shorter because of the absence of McGuinness, a key figure in Glasgow's recent successes in both tight and loose play.

Neil MacFarlane, the Minister for Sport, made an urgent plea to the Welsh Rugby Union yesterday to consider whether to go ahead with further matches against the touring South African youth team. As the tour got under way at Port Talbot, Mr MacFarlane warned the WRU of the implications for sport in Wales if the tour continued.

Mr MacFarlane's plea came after he had reported the manager's objection to the tour. He said he would be speaking to the president of the Rugby Football Union, Ron Jacobs, before he and his committee meet to decide whether the tour should continue. To ensure they were not misled, he said that the heads of government conference in Delhi Britain's commitment to the declaration on apartheid in sport was reaffirmed.

John Carlisle, Conservative MP for Llan North, called on Mr MacFarlane to promise that he would not "put any undue pressure or coercion" on the president and his committee over their decision.

Award to stud is richly deserved

By Michael Phillips Racing Correspondent The British breeders awards, now an annual event, will be presented for the second time in London on January 9 at a luncheon given by the Thoroughbred Breeders' Association. The awards were designed to whip up support and enthusiasm in Britain with competition from the United States and Ireland getting better and better.

The winners of 10 of these awards are listed in the table on the opposite page. The award of the TBA, has made a significant contribution to the British breeding industry. The winner of this award, which is given by the Duke of Devonshire, past president of the association, will be announced at the presentation.

The award to the leading British-based breeder of Flat racehorses for 1983, which is given by the Queen, will go to the White Lodge Stud at Cheveley, near Newark. This is singularly well deserved, not just because of Tecnoso's victory in the Derby this year, but because of the stud has operated for 30 years or more.

Miss Peggy Pacey wins the National Hunt breeders' award, which is given by jumping's greatest authority, the Queen Mother, thanks primarily to the achievements of Ryeman, who won the Arkle Challenge Trophy.

The broodmare award, presented by the Duke of Devonshire, is Mrs Moss, owned by Lady Tavistock. Mrs Moss achieved prominence thanks to the foals of her son, Jupiter Island, by St Paddy, and the Gimcrack Prize, presented by the Duke of Devonshire, is Mrs Mummy's Pet, who gets the Barleythorpe Stud's award for the second year in a row. This goes to the British-based stallion with most individual winners on the Flat during the year in question.

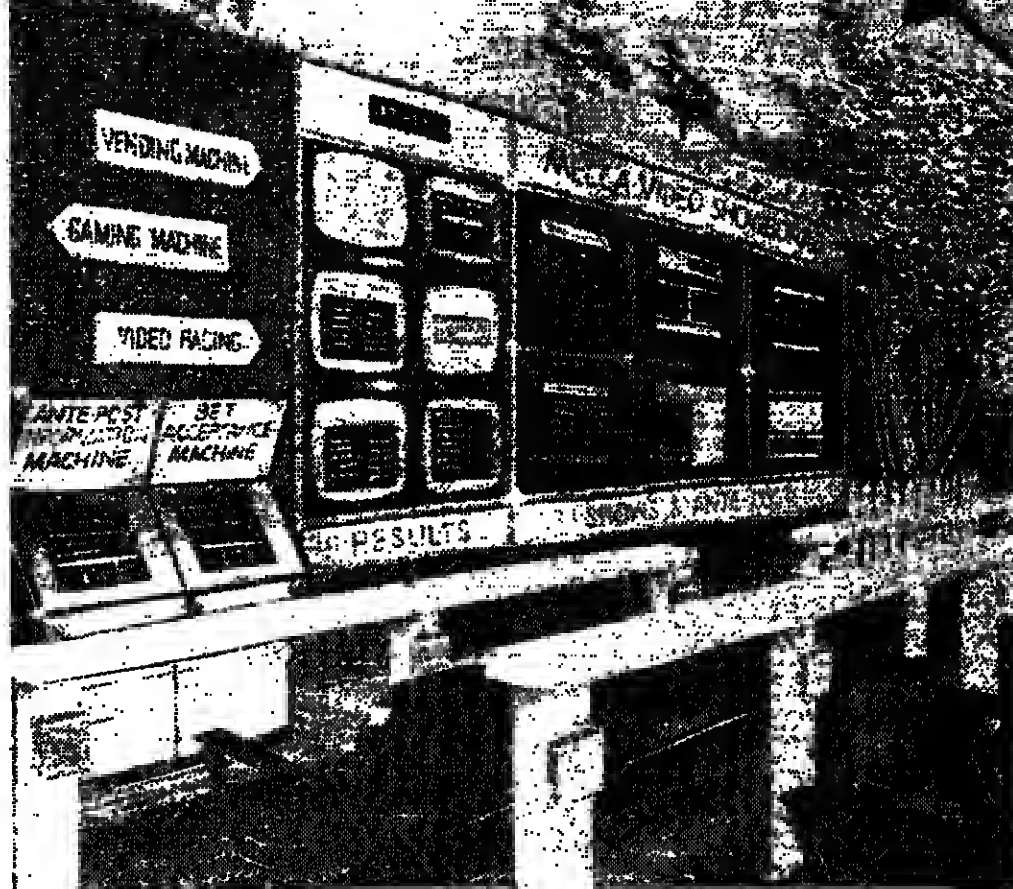
With Mighty Fly doing so well on the Flat last season and Combs Ditch shining under National Hunt rules, Jim Troy, their owner-breeder, thoroughly deserves to win the British Cup in question. The continued success of his offspring makes his death two seasons ago all the more regrettable.

Exactly the same sentiment applies to the stud who bred Troy became the leading British-based first-season sire, a position that is all the more remarkable for a Derby winner whose stock might be expected to decline during the second and third years of the award given by the British Bloodstock Agency to the leading British-based stallion in terms of prize money won on the Flat goes to Hill Road.

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A new idea (above) for the betting office of the future is likely to appear in three months' time. The system is to be installed by Mecca bookmakers, at first for the use of greyhound racing. The machines will be operated by the punters, who place their own win and forecast bets up to a £3 stake. The monitor is linked to a videodata which supplies the runners. Once the selection has been made, the punter puts in his

Exciting prospects set to make winning debuts over fences

Justifiable caution, perhaps, but Dickenson then gave himself away by admitting: "I thought training horses was difficult but tipping them must be a lot worse." Manfully ignoring the great man's ready-made excuses, the correspondents everywhere, it does look as if Trust the King is something to bet on in Hereford's Caraway Novices Chase. A winner at Ascot and a respectable eighth to Sahin du Lou at the Cheltenham Festival last season, this powerful son of Menelch has always seemed made for fences and should be up to coping with the likes of Square Rigger and Double Back.

Nicky Henderson, his trainer, is well satisfied with Trust the King's schooling, but not so happy about a couple of other issues. Henderson could not understand why Steve Smith, who has been a regular winner at Ascot on Saturday when the horse was a disappointing third to Aces Wild. When John Francombe, who rode Aces Wild, won on Linaw at Cheltenham previously, the horse made the running and Henderson did not give Smith Eccles instructions to ride a waiting race on Saturday.

Henderson is also far from pleased about the current handicapping of his New Zealand import, Antic, who runs in the Clove Chase. Antic has finished a distant last of four behind Wayward Lad at Huntingdon and "won" a two-horse race at Nottingham when his only rival slipped.

Hereford

12.30 COLTSFOOT HURDLE (3-y-o; £337; 2m) (17 runners) 1 314023 THE THUNDERER (D G Brunton) P M Taylor 11-7 ... A Carroll 13 314024 GEMMEL (M McCormack) M McCormack 11-7 ... M Taylor 14 314025 GEMMEL (M McCormack) M McCormack 11-7 ... M Taylor 15 314026 GEMMEL (M McCormack) M McCormack 11-7 ... M Taylor 16 314027 GEMMEL (M McCormack) M McCormack 11-7 ... M Taylor 17 314028 GEMMEL (M McCormack) M McCormack 11-7 ... M Taylor 18 314029 GEMMEL (M McCormack) M McCormack 11-7 ... M Taylor 19 314030 GEMMEL (M McCormack) M McCormack 11-7 ... M Taylor 20 314031 GEMMEL (M McCormack) M McCormack 11-7 ... M Taylor 21 314032 GEMMEL (M McCormack) M McCormack 11-7 ... M Taylor 22 314033 GEMMEL (M McCormack) M McCormack 11-7 ... M Taylor 23 314034 GEMMEL (M McCormack) M McCormack 11-7 ... M Taylor 24 314035 GEMMEL (M McCormack) M McCormack 11-7 ... M Taylor 25 314036 GEMMEL (M McCormack) M McCormack 11-7 ... M Taylor 26 314037 GEMMEL (M McCormack) M McCormack 11-7 ... 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THE ARTS

Michael Darlow has fought his way out of television type-casting to direct his first feature film, Accounts, to be shown on Channel 4 tonight.

Emotional self-discovery

Accounts, which is to be shown on Channel 4 tonight, is Michael Darlow's first feature film, though in fact he very nearly emerged as a feature director three years ago. At the end of 1980 he began work on The Desert King...



Robert Smeaton (left) and Michael McNally, with Elspeth Charlton as their mother

local team and is very much a part of the local scene. You might wonder at the scene where the two boys write poetry. I can only say that Michael gets the local kids in Haltwhistle writing poetry and doing their own plays.

Theatre

Oliver Aldwych

Evoking the whole of mid-Victorian London, but never seeking to deceive the spectator into believing he is looking at anything other than a stage-Sean Kenny's set for Oliver!

Special Occasions Ambassadors

Coinciding nicely with a lead letter in this newspaper about the marked effect on children if divorced parents manage to go on cooperating, Bernard Slade's two-hander comedy considers the effect of post-divorce meetings on the parents themselves.

Dance

Dash Dominion

I wish I could be more enthusiastic about the latest venture of Wayne Sleep's Dash, which opened this week for a short season at the Dominion.

Concert

BBCSO/Atherton Festival Hall/Radio 3

The second instalment in the Ravel/Varese Festival was rather like the first. We had exchanged the Queen Elizabeth for the Festival Hall, and the London Sinfonietta for the BBC Symphony Orchestra.

Television

Fictional facts

Q.E.D. (BBC 1) posed the question Eyewitness Evidence... Fact or Fiction? which rather missed the point: the bald distinction between fact and fiction is not helpful.

Divisional Court

Prisoner is entitled to go direct to solicitor

officers' conduct and the standing orders issued by the Home Office required that an internal complaint be initiated first. The Home Office contended that a solicitor had been had no interview yet between the applicant and his solicitors on that matter.

Law Report December 22 1983

Order not upset by remarriage

Jenkins v Liversay (formerly Jenkins) Before Sir John Arnold, President and Mrs Justice Hillborn (Judgment delivered December 21)

Court of Appeal

No privilege against self incrimination

Universal City Studios Inc and Others v Hubbard and Others Before Lord Justice Cumming-Bruce and Lord Justice Fox (Judgment delivered December 21)

Jury direction on intent in murder trials

Regina v Moloney (Allister Baden) Although in most murder cases it was sufficient, with regard to mens rea, merely to direct the jury that the prosecution must prove intent to kill or to do really serious bodily harm, there were cases, not limited to those where the deceased was someone other than the intended victim, where the circumstances made it not only appropriate but essential to give the direction in DPP v Hyatt (1975) AC 557.

Today's television and radio programmes

Edited by Peter Daville

BBC 1

- 8.00 Ceefax AM: News and...
8.30 Breakfast: Time with Frank...
9.00 Today's Thursday 'specials'...

TV-am

- 6.25 Good Morning Britain: with...
9.00 Today's News headlines...

ITV LONDON

- 9.00 Themes news headlines...
10.25 Film: Flash Gordon (1981)...

BBC 2

- 3.30 Film: Mr Blenkinsop Builds his...
5.00 News from ITV: 1.20 Thames...

CHANNEL 4

- 4.25 Film: The Three Ages (1923)...
5.30 Everybody Hates Children's...

Radio 4

- 6.00 News Briefing...
6.30 Today, including 6.30, 7.30, 8.30...

Radio 3

- 6.55 Weather, 7.00 News...
7.05 Morning Concert: part one...

Radio 2

- 5.00am Ray Moore: 7.30 Terry...
12.00 The Music While You Work...



Elizabeth Sprague, Josef and Maria (Radio 3, 7.30pm)

Radio 1

- News on the half-hour 6.30 am-9.30 pm...
6.00am Adrian John: 7.00 Miles...

FREQUENCIES: Radio 1: 105.3kHz/205m; 108.9kHz/275m; Radio 2: 69.3kHz/433m; 90.9kHz/330m; Radio 3: 121.5kHz/247m; VHF 90-92.5; Radio 4: 200.1kHz/1500m; VHF 92-95; LBC 115.2kHz/214m; VHF 97.3; Capital: 154.8kHz/214m; VHF 95.8; BBC Radio London: 145.8kHz/206m; VHF 94.8; World Service: 164.8kHz/453m.

REGIONAL TELEVISION VARIATIONS

Grid of regional television variations for Yorkshire, Border, Channel, Central, and other regions, listing local programmes and times.

THEATRES: Listings for various theatres including the Royal Opera House, Lyric Theatre, and others.

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ART GALLERIES: Listings for various art galleries including the Tate Gallery, National Gallery, and others.

EXHIBITIONS: Listings for various exhibitions including 'The World of the 19th Century' and others.

Shipyard strike called for January

David Felton
Labour Correspondent

The shipbuilding unions decided last night to proceed with an all-out national strike from January 6.

Attempts to avert the strike broke down yesterday after British Shipbuilders said that they were only prepared to clarify the existing pay offer and would not negotiate under duress.

In an exchange of letters, British Shipbuilders also told the 17 unions in the industry that it was not prepared to make "significant movement" in its 10-point survival package.

The strike of all 56,000 shipyard workers has been called to protest at the productivity changes which BS want. The management has offered a rise of £7 a week in return for agreement on changes in long-established working practices.

The union's determined reaffirmation of the strike threat came as controversy raged over the future of the Scott Lithgow yard on the Lower Clyde, which faces closure after the cancellation of a £86m order for an oil rig for Britoil.

Union leaders said that a meeting was to be held with British Shipbuilders in the new year to discuss the Scott Lithgow situation but that would be separate from any developments on a national strike.

In a telex to British Shipbuilders yesterday, the unions asked for an urgent response to the "clear indication" of workers' views that the productivity proposals were unacceptable.

The largest union, the General Maritime, Boilermakers and Allied Trades Union held a ballot of its 20,000-plus members which showed that 62 per cent supported a national strike.

Doubts were being raised last night over whether the union needs a two-thirds majority in support before action can be taken. Mr Jim Murray, the union's chief negotiator, said that the union's executive could overrule that portion of the rule book.

British Shipbuilders said that the strike threat had affected customers and damaged work prospects. "A strike will be even more harmful".

Senior officials of the 17 unions said that consultation exercises with members showed a clear majority in favour of a national strike.

Gandhi's jet-set Rasputin runs into trouble

From Michael Hamlyn, Delhi



Eight killed in French base bomb attack

Continued from page 1

Israeli bombings although the anonymous caller who telephoned the Voice of Lebanon radio station afterwards claimed a hit on an unheard of organization, called the Black hand, was responsible.

● JERUSALEM: Both Mr Yitzhak Shamir, the Israeli Prime Minister, and Mr Moshe Arens, his hawkish Defence Minister, yesterday delivered forthright warnings that Israeli attacks against what were termed terrorist targets in Lebanon and elsewhere would continue (Christopher Walker writes).

Addressing the Knesset only hours after the Israeli jet-bombardment, Mr Arens pledged to keep up attacks inside Syrian-held territory if terrorist violence against Israel did not cease.

"We shall not let the terrorists establish themselves in the Chouf region which we have evacuated. We shall continue to demand that the Druses evacuate them from the region."

Responding to opposition motions critical of the Government's handling of the PLO evacuation from Tripoli, northern Lebanon, which one deputy argued had given Mr Yasser Arafat a victory, Mr Arens replied that Israel had been capable of preventing the exit of the PLO, but had decided against doing so to avoid a confrontation with the West.

A black-bearded mystic, widely referred to as Mrs Indira Gandhi's Rasputin, who has had an uncanny hold over the Indian Prime Minister and her family has now found himself in deep trouble.

Swami Dharendra Bramachari, known to his respectful acolytes as "Swamiji", used to have unfettered entrance to 1, Safdarjung Road, where Mrs Gandhi lives. He runs three private aircraft, several Mercedes cars including a custom-built 500 SE, and has his own private air-strip.

He has long, lank hair, and wears a white dhoti with a strip of cloth, made of the finest homespun cotton, draped across over his chest and one shoulder.

He also has an arms factory in Jammu, and that may have proved his undoing. Though it might seem a little odd for a man of God to be manufacturing rifles, the yogi seems to see no apparent conflict. He has now been accused of not merely making guns, but of gun-running.

The state of Jammu and Kashmir is the most sensitive border state of all, and a police raid on the swami's factory there turned up 500 Spanish-made rifles, which had been brought in illegally. The police had been tipped off by a disgruntled trade union leader, who was upset at the small amount of piece-work available for his members since the Spanish guns were brought in.

Swamiji is now on bail, charged under the Indian Arms Act. He declared at a press conference that the guns were imported legally in order to improve the quality of his own guns. "When I do something, I like to do it well," he said.

But there was a big storm in the Lok Sabha, the Indian Parliament's Lower House, in which the Government did nothing to defend him. The swami put the fuss down to the influence of Dr Farooq Abdullah, the Chief Minister of Jammu and Kashmir. "I think he is taking it out on me because of his fight with Mrs Gandhi," he said.

His influence with Mrs Gandhi stretches back to 1959, when he was first introduced to the Nehru household. He was then but an up-and-coming teacher of yoga, brought to Delhi by Jagjivan Ram, the veteran Congress Harijan leader. His fame grew, while he lived in an outhouse of Mr Ram's bungalow.

After he was introduced to Pandit Nehru, and taught him some yoga exercises, he came into contact with Mrs Gandhi and her son, Sanjay, and his influence took a sharply rising curve.

He soon came to be patronized not for the sake of the way he could stand on his head, but because of the political influence he was able to wield. "Sanjay was a very good friend," the swami recalls. Others remember how his presence at Sanjay's funeral was like a royal progress with even Cabinet ministers rushing up to touch his feet.

Though his influence with Mrs Gandhi remains strong, her other son, Rajiv, is not so impressed by him. His entry to No 1 Safdarjung Road has been restricted.

Now he faces criminal charges. However, those who know both him and Rajiv are said to be placing their bets on the ability of the yogi to survive even this.



Worldly man of God: Swami Dharendra Bramachari in his Delhi office recently (above, left) and with Mrs Gandhi in happier times.

Frank Johnson in the Commons Yeovil's liberator meets only yawns

Mr Paddy Ashdown, who won the Conservative-held seat of Yeovil for the Liberals at the last general election, yesterday introduced that jewel in the crown of many a Liberal Assembly discussion document: a Bill providing for the establishment of regional assemblies in England.

Even whole Liberal Assemblies have been known to enter a coma after a few minutes of this subject, with only those speaking, or about to speak, remaining upright. But there is no denying the fanaticism or the minority who are excited by the astounding tedious cause. At such times one thinks instinctively of Mr Roy Jenkins - his declining years heightened by his being allied with people capable of feeling passion about regional assemblies. So it was interesting to see yesterday how Mr Ashdown would overcome widespread consumer resistance. He was genuinely excited and idealistic about the issue. That, from the point of view of his Conservative and Labour audience, made him insufferable.

"We see ourselves as members of a liberation movement", he pealed, apropos of the Liberal Party or possibly just of Yeovil Liberal Party. From Vietnam onwards, experience has taught many of us to be on our guard against bodies calling themselves Liberation Movement, and not just the peasant group of workers, peasants and intellectuals seeking agrarian-reform that its apologists in the *New York Times* and *Washington Post* had all along claimed it to be. It was quite simply a Liberal front.

After years of atrocities and guerrilla activity in Yeovil, sometimes operating at night out of isolated villages of the surrounding countryside, it had at the last general election overthrown the candidate of the enfeebled John Peyton regime. Peyton, of course, had been depicted in the Western elite press as a vicious right winger, but in reality he was just another ordinary, decent toff, who had once been a Conservative Minister of Transport.

Once in control of Yeovil, the Liberals have imposed a ruthlessly moderate regime, which has begun to menace the rest of the country in pursuit of the age-old dream of a Greater Liberal Somerset. Where was it? Ah, yes, Mr Ashdown's Bill on regional

assemblies in England. "We see ourselves as members of a liberation movement", he said, "to break the crushing power of the Leviathan bureaucracy, revitalizing local government institutions, handing back to the people of this country that power which in a true democracy would be and should be theirs". At this point someone - either a Tory or a Liberal member - groaned: "Oh God!"

The problem, from the point of view of the other parties, was that he was addressing them as if they were the Liberal Assembly. Furthermore, his act had about it a flavour of *circa* 1968, the deadly era of participation, as such it had for some of us a certain period charm. . . . the influence of the Prime Minister and the great Civil Service bureaucracy . . . genuine participative democracy . . . increasingly Parliament has arrogated to itself all the process of meaningful decision-making. What about viable feedback?

To his credit, Mr Ashdown had the courage of his clichés. Certainly he sounded dented, but he did not seem to mind. Perhaps no one had told him that his ideas were no longer fashionable, or perhaps, to his credit, he did not seem to care about that. All ideas become unfashionable in due course. In a few years' time, right-wingers will become unfashionable. Mr Ashdown has just had bad luck in his choice of era during which to be elected. Hence the confident ribaldry of the other parties at his expense yesterday. None the less, he pressed on. "I must be one of the few MPs who sought to get elected substantially to reduce the influence of Parliament and hand back to the people of Britain the power to control their own destiny", he assured us, wisely avoiding discussion of whether liberal attitudes on, inter alia, capital punishment and immigration represented the views of "the people."

Mr Ashdown sat down to cross-party yawns, but this unity between the two main parties was not maintained for the major statement of the day: Mr Patrick Jenkin, the Secretary for the Environment, being admirably unhypheral about nuclear leaks at Sellafield. These were the only recent leaks, about nuclear matters that had not been channelled to *The Guardian*; no Labour members were against them.

Today's events

Last chance to see
The British Art Show, an Arts Council touring exhibition at the Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery, Chamberlain Square. Mon to Sat 10 to 5; also at the Ikon Gallery, 58-72 John Bright Street, Birmingham; Tues to Sat 10 to 6 (ends Dec 22).
Paintings and drawings by the Brotherhood of Ruralists, Devises Museum, Long Street, Wilt; Tues to Sat 11 to 1 and 2 to 5 (ends Dec 22).

Words and Images from the Lake District, Collins Gallery, University of Strathclyde, 22 Richmond Street, Glasgow; Mon to Fri 10.5 (ends today).
"To Astonish the World" - an exhibition of decorative design over two centuries, the Wedgwood visitor centre, Barston, near Stoke-on-Trent, Staffs; Mon to Fri 9 to 5 (ends today).
The Draughtsman's Art: master drawing from the Whitworth Art Gallery, Whitworth Art Gallery, Manchester University, Whitworth Park, Manchester; Thurs 10 to 9 (ends today).

Carol Services

Festival of nine lessons and carols by the Cathedral Choir, Manchester Cathedral, Manchester, 7.30.
Carols by Candlelight, Pump Room, Bath, 7.30.
Carols, City Hall, Hull, 7.30.
Carols continuous with Merseyside County Police, Liverpool Parish Church, Pierhead, Liverpool, 12.12.
The Cathedral Carol Service, Worcester Cathedral, Worcester, 7.30.
Town Carol Service, Wallsall Town Hall, 6.45.

New books - paperbacks

The Literary Editor's selection of interesting books published this week:
Dutch Paintings, by Christopher Brown (Collins, £8.95)
Northern Ireland since 1920, by David Harkness (Holtain, £3.50)
Popular Tales of the West Highlands, by J. F. Campbell (Widowood House, £3.50)
Shadows on the Grass, by Simon Raven (Sphere, £2.95)
Tales from the Don, by Michael Strachan (Abacus, £2.95)
The Goebbels Diaries 1939-1941, translated and edited by Fred Taylor (Sphere, £1.95)
The Journals of Anne Nin, 1896-1974 (Quercus, £4.95)
The Politics of Parliamentary Reform, edited by David Judge (Heinemann, £3.50) PH

The papers

Commenting on a congressional investigation into the bombing of US Marines in Beirut the *New York Times* says: "A House subcommittee that inquired into the massacre of 241 marines in Lebanon eight weeks ago found their security inadequate and blames it on their officers in Beirut and in the chain of command all the way back to Washington. That there are important lessons to be learned from this tragedy is certain. But pointing fingers at individuals seems less useful. It is easy enough to retrospect to say the marines should have been prepared against so obvious a danger as a truck bomb. Surprising as it may seem, however, the danger cannot have been generally obvious. . . . Because the marines were under daily sniper and artillery attack, their commander, not illogically, put many of them into the steel-reinforced headquarters building for greater protection. That relocation created the final vulnerability. It is natural to assign blame for disasters and to seek scapegoats for misfortune. . . . But after all the post-mortem, the death of the young marines will remain most truly a consequence of national policy in Lebanon, not the burden for any one man to carry."

Weather

A depression will move away slowly NE from northern Scotland but a frontal trough over SW England is expected to move NE over southern and western Britain.
6am to midnight
London, SE, central N England, East Anglia, E, W Midlands: Cloud thickening, outbreaks of rain. SW backing SE for a time, moderate or fresh; mid, max temp 8 or 9C (46F to 48F).
Central S, SW England, Channel Islands, S Wales: Cloudy, rain, heavy at times, some drizzle intervals developing; wind SE veering SW, fresh or strong, locally gale force for a time; max temp 9C to 11C (48F to 52F).
E, NE England, Borders: Fog patches clearing, sunny but becoming cloudy with rain later; wind S veering SW, moderate; max temp 8C or 9C (46F to 48F).
N Wales, NW, NE England, Borders, Isle of Man; Bright intervals, cloud thickening, outbreaks of rain; wind S or SW moderate, locally fresh; max temp 8C or 9C (46F to 48F).
Lake District, Edinburgh, Dundee, SW Scotland, Glasgow: A few fog patches clearing, sunny but becoming cloudy with rain later; wind variable light, becoming SE or S moderate, locally fresh; max temp 7C to 9C (45F to 48F).
Aberdeen, central Highlands, Moray Firth, Argyll, NW Scotland, Northern Ireland: Showers dying out, sunny intervals becoming cloudy with rain later; wind becoming southerly, light increasing moderate, locally fresh; max temp 7C to 9C (45F to 48F).
NE Scotland, Orkney, Shetland: Cloudy, outbreaks of rain, slowly dying out; wind N fresh, or strong, variable light; max temp 7C to 9C (45F to 48F).
Outlook for tomorrow and Saturday: Continuing mild and unsettled.
SEA FARECAST: S North Sea, Straits of Dover; Wind SW light or moderate; sea slight, English Channel (E); Wind SW light increasing fresh or strong later; sea smooth becoming rough later. St George's Channel; Wind SW light becoming S strong or gale; sea smooth becoming choppy. Sea; Wind mainly S light or moderate; sea slight.

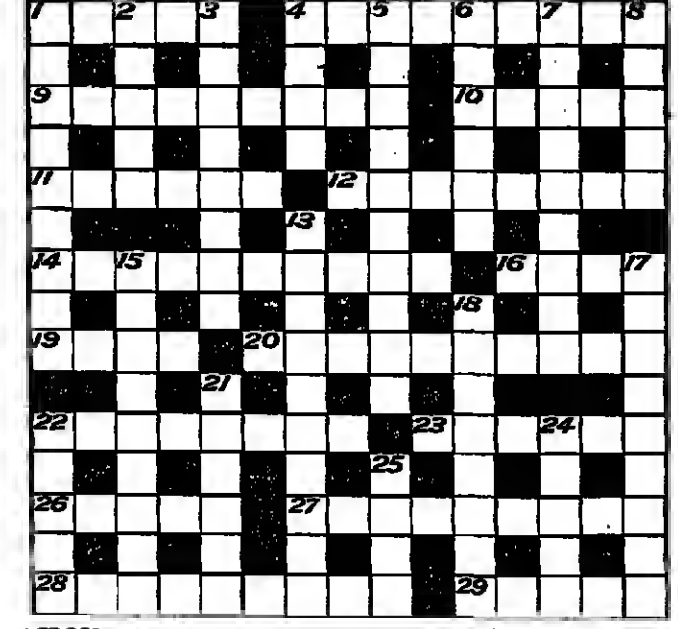
High tides

Location	AM	MT	HT	FT
London Bridge	3:00	7:1	3:21	7:3
Aberdeen	2:50	4:3	2:48	4:4
Abermouth	3:34	12:2	3:03	12:3
Cardiff	6:16	12:1	6:27	12:3
Devonport	12:03	6:7	12:15	6:8
Falmouth	6:43	5:4	7:13	6:5
Glasgow	2:13	6:5	2:24	6:6
Hull	12:52	5:9	1:20	4:8
Holyhead	11:34	5:7	11:45	5:7
London	3:00	7:1	3:21	7:3
Lytham	12:12	6:4	12:24	6:5
Lowestoft	10:58	11:0	11:08	11:1
Manchester	12:15	6:2	12:26	6:3
Millport Haven	7:31	7:1	7:38	6:9
Newquay	6:21	7:1	6:28	7:2
Oban	12:15	6:2	12:26	6:3
Penzance	6:19	5:7	6:45	5:8
Portsmouth	12:28	4:8	12:44	4:8
Southampton	12:15	6:2	12:26	6:3
Swansea	7:35	6:5	8:04	6:4
Wexford	12:54	5:4	1:02	5:5
Wilton-on-Tizza	11:46	4:2	11:57	4:4

Around Britain

Location	Sun	Rain	Max	Min
Southwest	0.6	0.4	46	34
Bristol	0.6	0.4	46	34
London	0.6	0.4	46	34
North	0.6	0.4	46	34
East	0.6	0.4	46	34
West	0.6	0.4	46	34
South	0.6	0.4	46	34
Central	0.6	0.4	46	34
Northwest	0.6	0.4	46	34
Southwest	0.6	0.4	46	34
London	0.6	0.4	46	34
North	0.6	0.4	46	34
East	0.6	0.4	46	34
West	0.6	0.4	46	34
South	0.6	0.4	46	34
Central	0.6	0.4	46	34
Northwest	0.6	0.4	46	34

The Times Crossword Puzzle No. 16,316



- ACROSS**
- Rosinante, for one, put on stage (5).
 - Rin into one who enumerates letters (9).
 - Tris over again, being a learner fit practice (9).
 - "Fairly hot when workers get together thus (5).
 - Public performance of melody in a simple key (6).
 - Undertakings of our era on right of presentation to a benefice (8).
 - Depositing cash to support railway? (10).
 - A couple of pages on a plane, perhaps (4).
 - Fret, causing mental enfeeblement (4).
 - Journalist chap takes the German ferry spirit (10).
 - Support for Rand, perhaps, in inclement weather (8).
 - Against, or in Paris towards, America (6).
 - Thickness of rope Mill found profitable? (5).
 - In retirement then, a grim, upsetting experience (9).
 - Breach of faith of tutor and youth leader? About right (9).
 - Why, we hear, idle characters return (5).
- DOWN**
- Route in low water in Morocco (9).
 - Doorkeeper demanding silence in Row? (15).
 - Instructing - in rail travel? (8).
 - Midshipman commonly having no preference (4).
 - About to drink to fellow Scotsman, was he? (10).
 - Hounds put out like hunters at grass (6).
 - Follow metrical system, perhaps, in tendency to excel (9).
 - French novel for this type? The contrary, probably (5).
 - Intolerance of Gloriana dairymaid's introduction (10).
 - Bit zany, perhaps - one without head for this architecture (9).
 - Husband arranged dates in the agricultural area (9).
 - Fabric of type rats ruin (or moths?) (8).
 - Very cold for one of Noah's parasites, say (16).
 - Sounds like a hill named long ago (5).
 - Empty place in, for example, Leamington church (5).
 - No oil-painting, this customer (4).
- CONCISE CROSSWORD PAGE 8**

Jumbo crossword

The Times Jumbo Christmas crossword will appear on Saturday, December 24. Newsagents may wish to order extra supplies to ensure that regular readers can order a copy.

Parliament today

Commons (9.30): Christmas adjournment debates on various topics.

Anniversaries

Births: John Cromie, painter, founder of the "Norwich School", Norwich, 1768; Jean Henri Fabre, entomologist, Saint Léons, France, 1823; Giacomo Puccini, Luca, Italy, 1858; Edgar Varèse, composer, Paris, 1883; Desha's George Elliot, (Mary Ann Evans), London, 1880; Richard von Krafft-Ebing, psychiatrist, Graz, Austria, 1902.

Electric boats

Viscount St Davids, who is chairman of the Electric Boat Owners Association, is anxious to encourage the use of this silent, non-polluting form of recreation, and wished to hear from conservation-minded waterside residents (including pub landlords and the like) who can supply an ordinary 15-hp power outlet not more than 50 yards from a mooring. Boat owners will pay £2 for overnight use of the mooring and re-charging, which uses only about £1 worth of electricity. Details from Viscount Mark's Crescent, Regent's Park, London NW1 7TS. He is also pleased to show his electric boat by appointment at his canal-side home.

Stamp competition

The National Army Museum is holding a "design an Army postage stamp" competition in conjunction with its current exhibition "The British Army on stamps". The exhibition is open to young people up to 18. Prizes will be awarded for the best designs based on museum exhibits. Closing date is January 15, 1984.

The pound

Country	Bank	Bank
Australia S	1.69	1.75
Austria Sch	28.85	27.52
Belgium Fr	83.75	79.75
Canada \$	124.00	118.00
Denmark Kr	14.76	14.00
Finland Mk	8.69	8.29
France Fr	12.32	11.82
Germany DM	4.06	3.87
Greece Dr	160.00	150.00
Hong Kong \$	11.30	10.72
Ireland Pt	1.30	1.25
Italy Lira	2450.00	2340.00
Japan Yen	349.00	331.00
Netherlands Gld	4.58	4.35
Norway Kr	115.54	109.94
Portugal Esc	194.00	184.00
South Africa Rd	1.82	1.69
Spain Ptas	231.00	221.00
Sweden Kr	11.98	11.38
Switzerland Fr	3.26	3.09
USA \$	1.46	1.41
Yugoslavia Dnr	214.00	204.00

Lighting-up time

London 4.24 pm to 7.35 am
Bristol 4.34 pm to 7.45 am
Edinburgh 4.10 pm to 8.15 am

Yesterday

Temperature at midday yesterday: c, cloud; f, rain; s, sun.
Birmingham 7.45 Jersey 8.45
Bristol 7.45 London 8.45
Cardiff 1.48 Manchester 8.45
Edinburgh 7.45 Newcastle 8.45
Glasgow 1.48 Ronaldsway 8.45

Highest and lowest

Yesterday: Highest day temp: Cambridge 12C (54F); Lowest night temp: London 2C (36F); Highest night temp: Oxford 10C (50F); Lowest day temp: London 1C (34F).

London

Yesterday: Temp: max 8m to 6pm, 10C (50F); min 6pm to 6am, 7C (45F); Humidity 50%.
Retail Price Index: 341.9
London: The FT Index closed 2.2 up at 772.0.

Rate Bill attack by Rippon
Made rebound
Bank strike
Postal peace
England dates